

# Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 24th September, 1903.

[ALL-NIGHT SITTING.]

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

## PAPER PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Amended regulations under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

## FEDERAL MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James) informed the House that he had received from Mr. Alfred Deakin official notification of the changes in the Federal Cabinet which were announced in this evening's *Daily News*. The new Ministers were sworn in this afternoon.

## QUESTION—POULTRY ON EXPERIMENTAL FARM.

MR. HASSALL asked the Minister for Lands: Whether the poultry on the experimental farm at Narrogin, sittings of whose eggs are being offered to the public, are from imported pure bred stock or from a cheap lot of birds picked up locally.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Some imported, others locally bred. In each case birds were carefully selected. Several birds winning prizes at last poultry show were reared from eggs purchased from the Agricultural Department.

## QUESTION—STATE NURSERIES, DISTRIBUTION.

MR. GORDON asked the Treasurer: 1, What trees and plants (giving varieties) have been distributed from the State Nurseries during the last twelve months.

2, To whom they were supplied, and at what charge, if any. 3, Whether it is a fact that trees and plants have been supplied to Municipalities and Roads Boards and afterwards sold by those bodies to the public.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, About forty thousand of the following varieties:—

Raised in Pots.—Pepper Trees, Sugar Gum, Red Flowering Gum, Desert Gum, Cypress of sorts, African Frenella, W.A. Cypress Pine, Norfolk Island Pine, Bunya Bunya Pine, Indian Cedar, Mammoth Tree, Arbor Vita, Honey-locust Tree, White Box, Silver Weeping Wattle, Golden Wattle, Black Wattle, Camphor Laurel, Peppermint, Carob Bean, Pyramid Tree, Cheese Wood, Queensland Flame Tree, Silky Oak, Morton Bay Fig, India-rubber, Port Macquarie Fig, Desert Yucca, Virgillia Capensis, Californian Elderberry, Black Kennedya, Black Apple (N.S.W.), N.S.W. Deal, Pittosporum of sorts, African Silver Tree, Date Palm, Algaroba Tree.

In Bamboo Tubes.—Golden Wattle.

Open-rooted.—Pines of sorts, White Cedar, Locust Acacia, Basket Willow, Kurrajong, Box Elder, Sycamore, Plane Tree, Upright Poplar, Silver Poplar, Evergreen English Oak, Deciduous English Oak, Upright Cypress, Spreading Cypress, Queensland Flame Tree, Red Cedar, Boxthorn.

2, To municipalities, schools, churches, roads boards, agricultural halls, hospitals, cemetery boards, orphanages, park boards, mechanics' institutes, charitable institutions, recreation reserves, and farmers throughout the State. No charge was made. 3, I cannot say.

## QUESTION—RAILWAY FIRE INSURANCE.

MR. PIGOTT asked the Treasurer: 1, Whether the scheme formulated by the Government to cover their own insurance risks will extend to the Railway Department, and from what date. 2, Whether there is any contract or contracts existing between the Railway Department and any insurance company or companies for the insurance of property under the control of that Department, including goods in transit. 3, If any such contracts exist, whether they are verbal or written, and when they will expire.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The decision of the Government to cover their own insurance risks extends to the Railway Department, except as regards stores and goods in

goods sheds, for which the Commissioner would be liable in the event of loss or damage by fire, and the buildings containing such stores and goods. It operates from the expiry of the present policies. (See below.) 2. Contracts exist for the insurance of railway buildings, goods contained therein, and goods in transit. 3. The contract for insurance of buildings is written, and expires on the 1st January, 1904. The contract for insurance of goods in transit is written; it expires on the 31st December, 1904. Both contracts are subject to earlier cancellation at the option of the Commissioner of Railways, or in the event of legislation affecting departmental insurance.

#### BREAD BILL.

Read a third time and returned to the Legislative Council with amendments.

#### REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from the previous Tuesday.

MR. HARPER in the Chair; the PREMIER in charge of the Bill.

Second Schedule -- Assembly Electorates:

THE CHAIRMAN: An amendment was moved at the last sitting to insert the word "Beaconsfield" after the description of "Balcatta."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The amendment was moved by him in order that a discussion as to whether certain alterations should be made in the schedule should take place. There was no desire to see the debate unnecessarily prolonged. It was necessary to move the amendment in order to discuss the question at large, but it was to be hoped the main discussion would take place at this point, whether a general alteration should take place or not. He was not bound to Beaconsfield or any other name; it might be altered. He wished to test the question as to whether the Government were prepared to make such amendments in the schedule to bring it more in accordance with what he believed were the views of the people of the country. He was not wedded to Beaconsfield or another seat for Fremantle at all, but he wished the main discussion to take place now.

MR. FOULKES: Having the whole discussion on the present amendment might have a tendency to shorten the debate. From what he could gather, the only point on which there was a difference was how far the agricultural interests were to be represented in the House. Practically all sides were agreed on the number of members to be allowed to the pastoralists, but with regard to the agricultural interests certain sections said the representation should be only 10 seats, while others said there should be a considerably larger number, the result of the reduction being that three members should go to the metropolitan area and one to the goldfields. During the last two years this country had been making every effort to get people to settle on the land, and lately the Minister for Lands had taken upon himself to advertise that we had splendid land in this country, the result of which was that—the advertisement having only been in for a few weeks—there was a probability of a large influx of agriculturists to this country. There was also another factor which had to be considered. All classes of the community were complaining of the cost of living, and the general consensus of opinion was that if we were to obtain a reduction in the cost of living the only means was to encourage settlement as much as possible, for the more produce that could be grown here the cheaper the cost of living would be. That being the state of affairs, it seemed rather extraordinary that certain members should think this the right juncture and the right time to decrease the amount of representation for the agricultural interests in the House. This was a people's question, and he looked at it from that point of view. Our duty was to do something to reduce the cost of living, and the best way in which we could serve all classes of the community to reduce the cost of living was to take every possible step for the purpose of increasing our production. It was therefore essential that the agricultural interest more than any other should be particularly well looked after, and this was not the right time to diminish the number of agricultural representatives in this House. In the constituency of Claremont were many artisan electors, who were not concerned

particularly as to an increase of two or three more members for the Perth district; but they were concerned about the high cost of living, and they, like others, must realise that it was important to encourage production in the agricultural districts as the most effective means of reducing the cost of living while also providing more work in the towns. It was an argument, too, that the railways in the agricultural districts of the South-West did not pay particularly well, and every encouragement should be given to increase settlement in those districts so as to make the railways pay better. It had been argued that the people in populous centres could be relied on to do justice to the agricultural interest when any question came up in this House. Still, though the people in populous centres might mean well in regard to the agricultural interest, yet very few of them were sufficiently acquainted with it to enable them to see how best to carry out that good intention. The member for West Perth had been posing for some years in this House as a friend of agriculture, yet he now sought to prove his friendship by proposing that the agricultural representation in this House should be reduced by one-third. The populous centres also had the great advantage of local government, with powerful municipal councils elected by large bodies of ratepayers; and so strong were these bodies that they did not feel it necessary to approach the Government through local members of Parliament, but these councils went directly to the Government and stated their wants. These bodies exercised great influence; whereas the roads boards in agricultural districts, although having powers of rating and road making, could not be compared in importance with municipal councils in regard to their influence on political questions. It might well be said also that no other constituencies in the State were so well represented in Parliament as were Perth and Fremantle, because out of some 50 members in this House, about 30 of them resided in the metropolitan district between Midland Junction and Fremantle, and their urban environment must influence their actions in regard to political questions affecting Perth and Fremantle; so that these constituencies were particularly well repre-

sented in this House. The influence that a capital city might exercise on government was illustrated in the case of the Federal Parliament, for a great demand had arisen lately for removing the seat of the Federal Government from Melbourne, in order to dissociate the Parliament from those influences which were particularly strong in a place like Melbourne. Some of the so-called agricultural districts in this State had within the last few years, through increase of settlement, lost their agricultural character to a large extent, and were now practically urban constituencies, particularly in the case of Albany and Bunbury. Until 1893-4, Bunbury was essentially an agricultural town; but latterly, because of the timber trade and the shipping, its population had practically doubled, and Bunbury was an urban community living on the agricultural district behind it. In the constituency of the member for Bunbury there could hardly be more than half a dozen farmers. The same applied to Albany. Last year the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) spoke of Albany as a port, and recognised that it should not be considered an agricultural electorate.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And the hon. member classed it similarly.

MR. FOULKES: Yet the hon. member recently asked us to look at it as an agricultural district. Some members advocated the abolition of the Forrest electorate. Last year, speaking of this electorate, the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) said it was practically a Labour constituency, created to remove the disturbing element of Labour from agricultural constituencies; and the hon. member explained that by "disturbing element" he meant that Labour in an agricultural industry represented interests different from those known as agricultural, and that the Forrest electorate, though awkward in conception, was the only fair method of giving representation to certain workers on timber stations. Last year the hon. member supported the Forrest electorate, and doubtless had the same opinion now, though he was bound to his new party.

MR. NANSON: The Bill had since been altered.

MR. FOULKES: But the numbers in the Forrest division were the same now as last year.

MR. NANSON: Last year's Bill provided for 47 members.

MR. FOULKES: The same principle would apply. The members for West Perth (Mr. Moran) and the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) had almost threatened to go to the country on this question. A few years ago the former sought re-election for Kalgoorlie as a Minister, with unfortunate results. His electors clamorously refused to hear him, although he attempted for two or three hours to make himself audible. The member for the Murchison also went to the country, and although elected because he had the good sense to represent an agricultural constituency, yet his Ministry came to a calamitous end, being knocked out in a couple of days; and the then Premier, the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) had never been the same man since. Having had such dreadful experience of appealing to the country, those gentlemen evidently wished other members to go through the same ordeal. A clean-cut issue was before the Committee. Were we prepared to do justice to the agriculturists? He (Mr. Foulkes) was not afraid of telling his constituents that he would not agree to the agriculturists having only 10 members in the House.

MR. MORAN: Why not say seven, or even six?

MR. FOULKES: To agriculture being represented by six, seven, or 10 members he would never consent. We were going to insist that they should have a fair show and fair play in the House. He (Mr. Foulkes) held the same opinions that the member for the Murchison held last year when he said that the Bill was an honest attempt to do justice to all classes and interests in the State. He did not know whether that was an original statement or a quotation. At any rate he was giving the member credit for the point being his own. He felt certain that on this occasion we could not do wrong in agreeing with what the member for the Murchison said last year.

MR. MORAN: The intention of the movers in this matter was first of all to have a discussion on the main question, but that was now prevented by the ruling of the Chairman; therefore we must discuss details. He resented the statement which had been made by certain persons and in the Press that members

were obstructing the business of the country by this agitation. Ever since we had any constitutional history the hoary conservative who wished to pose before the country as the friend of democracy had always stated that the agitator or mover in the line of progress was obstructing the business of the country. The man firmly seated on the Treasury bench, and who had large voting power, always thought that anything advanced by those who wished to distribute taxation by giving the man who was paying the tax a fair share of representation was obstructing the business of the country. He treated this as claptrap. We wished to do justice to the men who were consuming as well as to those who were producing. There had been no attempt at obstruction; if members wished to obstruct, the subject could be strung out till Christmas. That was not our policy. As he said the other night, there was some jerryandering on both sides to get men to vote on the one side, knowing all the time their votes would be nullified. He hoped the discussion would be finished to-night. He wanted to take notice of a leading article which appeared in one of the leading newspapers of the State dealing with the question of the Constitution, and which sought to belittle the movement which had taken place in the House. The article started by saying that there was no difference between what was proposed by the cross-bench party and what the Government proposed. If that were so, was it not marvellous that the Government should have raked up supporters, and that there were 49 members in the House the other night, all of whom were against the amendment except the comparative few who had banded themselves together beforehand. All were Government supporters excepting 18 or 19, and such a number had not been seen in the Chamber before at one time.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: They had come to hear the hon. member.

MR. MORAN: They had come because they had been ordered here by the gentleman who the other night said he had them at his command. A newspaper which commanded wide support, and had held a leading position in the State, should be taken notice of. We knew the news columns of that journal were above re-

proach. He wished newspapers in other parts of the country would follow the lead of that newspaper and give faithful reports, and then they were entitled to their own views in the leading articles. The leading article referred to said that the difference between what the Government proposed and what was proposed by the cross-bench party was as the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. If there was no difference, then why were sick members from Fremantle dragged from their beds the other night, half dressed and with yards of woollen flannel around their necks? The difference between tweedledum and tweedledee was this, that the cross-bench party were displacing the power of voting in this Chamber by eight votes. That was all; just that and nothing more. The fact remained we proposed to give the people of Western Australia authority in this Chamber by displacing the power from property and giving it to the people. We were striking out four seats from the agricultural portion of the country, and we were dealing with population as well as interests. We were displacing four seats from thinly-populated places which were as old as Perth, and giving them to big centres on a population basis. We were twitted to-day with three charges. We were accused because we did not bring in a Bill on a population basis altogether. We were accused because we did not give agricultural interests more than they had, and we were accused of being inconsistent because we gave four members to the Northern constituencies. It was hard to know what would have satisfied the writer of that article. Let him (Mr. Moran) answer one or two arguments submitted by the member for Claremont. The first point that member took was advertising our land. In the name of common sense what had advertising land to do with the question before the Committee?

MR. FOULKES: What he had said was that, owing to the advertisements which the Minister for Lands had inserted calling attention to our land, a great number of people were settling on the land.

MR. MORAN: That he admitted was quite true, but more people were coming to the populous centres than to the thinly populated places. Was it not just as true that people were settling on the

great goldfields? Now we came to the real issue. The hon. member said it was far more important to go on to the land than on the goldfields or into the towns. The hon. member therefore thought that by giving two or three members to the agricultural constituencies in this House we should push the people on the land. That was the argument if it amounted to anything. In fact the hon. member suggested that we should send four agricultural members to stand on the jetty to put halters around the necks of people and pull them into the bush. The second question raised by the member for Claremont was as to the cost of living, and that member asked the Assembly to consider that the cost of living would be decreased by increasing the number of agricultural members in the House.

MR. FOULKES: By increasing agricultural settlement.

MR. MORAN: If his memory served him right the agricultural representatives in this Chamber had always refused to reduce the cost of living. Those members in this Chamber only last year defeated the striking off of the duties on the sliding-scale. That party in this Chamber who were now keeping on the deferential railway rates were supported by the bulk of agricultural members on both sides of the House. Of all the rotten arguments submitted in this debate that was the worst. The one thing the agricultural representative naturally resented was anything that would decrease the price of the article he was producing. It was the same with every producer in the community. All through the speech of the member for Claremont, and the long jangle of figures and sophistries of the Premier the other evening, the word "consumer" was not mentioned. What did the Premier say in answer to his (Mr. Moran's) interjection the other evening, as to why should the farmers get four times the representation in the House? The Premier's answer was, the farmer was a producer. The population of this State was made up of about 230,000 people. In the sense that the word "producer" was used as referring to the farmer, then we could take it that there were 220,000 consumers and 10,000 producers, and then he was overdoing the mark. Therefore all consideration was to be

given to the 10,000 producers, while the 220,000 consumers were not to be considered at all. Had there been equal voting values in this Chamber, the cost of living in this State would have gone down long ago. The sliding scale would have been abolished last session if the population in the country could have spoken with equal voting value. The agricultural party in this House had been able to keep on the food duties. If the member for Claremont conceded the principle that there should be no taxation without representation, then the man on the goldfields and on the back blocks was taxed more than any other member of the community, because he was taxed on everything he ate or used.

**MR. BURGESS:** Protection on corn in New South Wales had reduced the price of corn.

**MR. MORAN:** Having been always a protectionist, he did not refuse to give fair representation to consumers merely because he was a protectionist. When he represented a goldfields constituency he advocated the cause of the farmer every time; and if for seven sessions in this Chamber he advocated the farming interest against the body of opinion on the goldfields, he was not likely now to do anything that would injure the agricultural interest, and he would to-morrow fight against any injustice being done to agriculture. But that was not the question. Had it not been for the Ivanhoe Venture, he would have been still a representative of the goldfields—members knew that was so; therefore the remarks which had been made about his defeat on the goldfields were hardly in point. In New Zealand, a most democratic country, also in New South Wales and South Australia, justice was done to the farmer although there was popular representation in Parliament. As to town people not travelling into country districts, was it not also true that people in country districts seldom travelled outside their particular locality? Popular representation in Parliament would not harm the farming industry. The electors of Perth would not support a member who was parochial. They wanted representatives who knew the country and would serve its best interests. Those members who were now moving to obtain popular representation in this

Chamber had done their best to strike such a medium as would give popular government on fair lines. In this amending scheme the goldfields were getting 17 members, and that number was less than their quota entitled them to, while 27 per cent. more representation was proposed in the scheme for agricultural districts as compared with the goldfields or with Perth. This was not a paltry question, and could not be laughed off. Those who were striving to get popular representation were in favour of trusting the people, while the Government were against trusting the people. In the policy speech of the present Premier when he succeeded the late Mr. Leake, there was a passage to this effect: "We are going to amend the Constitution, and we are going to follow largely the lines of population. We must keep pace with the increasing population of Western Australia." That was a pledge he gave then, but he was not carrying it out now. Another of the pledges of the James Government was that they would reduce the number of members in the Upper House to 21, as stated in the same speech. They promised reduction of the number of members in both Chambers, but they had abandoned that. They promised popular representation, but they had abandoned that. They promised to make food cheap, but they had abandoned that. [THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; they had not.] One great blessing the present Government gave to agriculturists, and especially to orchardists, was that they introduced the codlin moth. [MR. FOULKES: It was the Leake Government.] The Leake Government, was it? There was not a single member of the present Government who was not also a member of the Leake Government; therefore he was right in saying the present Government introduced the codlin moth. Even the present Premier was at that time an honorary member of the Leake Ministry. One great thing the present agricultural Government had done was that while sitting on the Opposition benches they fought all they could against the interests of the farmers, and it would be remembered that one of the Ministers said on a public occasion that agriculturists in Western Australia had the soul of a potato and the heart of a cabbage. Yet that party when sitting in

Opposition had opposed every agricultural railway that was proposed in this House, though they were now supported in power by agricultural members. It was sought now to say that those who were moving for more popular representation were enemies of the farming industry. He (Mr. Moran) was never an enemy of the farmer, and though it was said that he and others were now seeking to injure the farmer by taking away some of their representation in this House, he was glad that the amending proposal had been brought forward, and he did not think it would rest or die here. By supporting the Government, Opposition members were violating every tradition of an Opposition. It was their votes which would keep the Government in power in order to disfranchise the people. He hoped we should dispose of the question to-night. There was no idea of retarding the business of the country, though no business was so important as making this House representative of the people.

MR. EWING: It was pleasing to learn from the preceding speaker that the debate might end to-night. Of this there was some prospect if the hon. member would not speak so much, though it was always pleasing to listen to him. But when he took up so much time, it was unfair for him to accuse direct Government supporters of entering into a conspiracy of silence. Such members were not "dumb driven cattle." He (Mr. Ewing) was returned by a constituency as democratic as any other in the State, and in addressing his electors he told them that he favoured redistribution, not on a population basis, but based so as to do justice to interests also. All should express their views on this Bill, for the country expected to hear their reasons for voting. The scheme of the cross-bench party had not been given in detail. It should have stated the agricultural seats intended to be eliminated and amalgamated with others. Among these, he understood, were the Sussex and the Nelson electorates. Those hon. members knew little of the country who talked of eliminating such a large district, having a total population of about 3,000.

MR. MORAN: Not 2,000.

MR. HIGHAM: Greenbushes must be added.

MR. DAGLISH: We were dealing with the figures of the Government.

THE PREMIER: None knew with what figures the cross-bench party were dealing.

MR. EWING: The Government figures were useless for this purpose. The issue was a redistribution on a population basis—practically what the amendment sought—or one approximating to a population basis but giving due consideration to interests. No State in the Commonwealth distributed its seats on anything like a population basis. The member for Hannans (Mr. Bath) pointed approvingly to the automatic redistribution in New South Wales. The schedule in this Bill closely approximated to the New South Wales system, having regard to the difference in population. At the end of 1901 the population of New South Wales was 1,405,000. There were 125 seats, and on the rolls 343,466 voters. On a population basis the quota would be 2,750. Yet the Parliament responsible for that redistribution gave due consideration to the very principle which our Government advocated, fixing the quota sufficiently high to enable thinly populated districts to increase their population to the quota.

MR. BATH: A margin of 15 or 20 per cent. was allowed, yet we had a margin of 66 per cent.

THE PREMIER: And yet some New South Wales electorates had 4,000 voters and others 1,700.

MR. MORAN: That was not the fault of the Act.

MR. EWING: Some 26 seats in the metropolitan and suburban districts of New South Wales had in all 81,355 voters, or a quota of 3,130, closely approximating to the arrangement for our metropolitan area in the Bill. That New South Wales quota was 380 above the quota which would be arrived at on a population basis, 2,750. The districts with 3,000 electors and over totalled 38 seats, with a number on the roll of 132,593—an average of 3,489. None would call that redistribution on a population basis, seeing that the quota on such a basis was 2,750. That was 739 votes per member over the quota. In Sydney and its densely populated environs, 38 seats, each having 2,500 up to 3,000 voters, had a total of 102,816

voters, or an average of 2,706. The seats having from 2,000 to 2,500 voters were 38, representing 87,471 electors, or an average of 2,300. The representation given to small or farming districts was worthy of note. Due consideration was given to agricultural interests, as the following list would show: Bourke, 1923.

MR. BATH: That was not agricultural but pastoral only.

MR. EWING: Partly agricultural. Bowral, 1,856; Hay, 1,975; Kiama, 1,855; the Lachlan, 1,856; Queanbeyan, 1,961; Tenterfield, 1,735; the Tweed, 1,902; Uralla-Walcha, 1,828; Wentworth, 1,726; and Newcastle West, 1,969. This accounted for 11 seats and 20,586 electors, an average of 1,870. Analysing the figures for this Bill, the average for agricultural seats was 1,450.

MR. MORAN: Yes, without the pastoral; but the hon. member had included pastoral seats in his New South Wales list.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: There were in New South Wales no pastoral industries to compare with those of the Kimberleys.

MR. TAYLOR: Why did not the hon. member class Goulburn, Bathurst, and Orange as agricultural?

MR. EWING: This was a fair analysis of the New South Wales electorates. There were 38 seats representing 132,593 electors, with a quota of 3,489; 38 representing 102,816, with a quota of 2,706; 38 representing 87,471, with a quota of 2,300; eleven seats with 20,586 electors giving a quota of 1,870. Could any member say the distribution in New South Wales was placed on anything like a population basis? It did not approach that. The figures he was giving were perfectly reliable and authentic, having been taken from the Year Book. He was astonished to find when analysing the figures in connection with the Bill before the Committee that the New South Wales figures were very analogous to ours.

MR. DAGLISH: What year did the figures relate to?

MR. EWING: Last election, 1901.

MR. DAGLISH: When was the Bill passed?

MR. EWING: In the previous Parliament.

MR. DAGLISH: These anomalies had grown up since.

MR. EWING: The hon. member for Hannans said there was an automatic method of fixing the quota; therefore it was fair to place these figures before the Committee. He was satisfied there was not much in the vapourings of members who were opposed to the Government scheme when those members said we were not trusting the people. Could those members point to any other State where a population basis obtained? He was satisfied if we obtained the figures relating to New South Wales up to date it would be found that every interest was properly and faithfully conserved, not so much in regard to population as it was desired should be given in this State. If there was any State in the Commonwealth which would be prepared to extend voting on a population basis then it was the State of New South Wales, whose constitution dated back for 47 years, where all the industries were established, the large towns were established and farmers were prosperous. But it was not so. The figures he had given proved clearly that New South Wales had given as much regard to interests as had been given by the Government in this House. Western Australia had only had ten years of Responsible Government, all the industries were growing up, and the farming population was becoming settled. The member for the Williams and the Minister for Lands would tell members that a great farming population was becoming settled in the South-Western portion of the country. One had only to go into the Lands Office and look at the plans to be astonished at the settlement taking place. We had only to give these people time to settle on the land. He would like to deal with the figures as they appealed to him, and he intended to support the Government on their Redistribution of Seats Bill. He had no knowledge of the inner workings of the conspiracy which it was said existed between the Government and the Opposition; he had not made inquiries. He had taken his own initiative and was prepared to stand or fall with the Government. As far as the metropolitan area of this State was concerned, there were Perth, North Perth, East Perth, West Perth, and Canning, five seats with 18,000 electors, giving an average of 3,600 electors. Then there was Fre-

mantle, consisting of Fremantle, North Fremantle, South Fremantle, and East Fremantle, four seats with 12,000 electors, an average of 3,000 electors. Then there were Claremont, Subiaco, and Balcatta, three seats with 10,200 electors on the roll, an average of 3,400. Guildford, one seat, 3,000 electors, making a total of 43,200 electors for 13 seats, or an average of 3,323 electors for the metropolitan area, almost exactly the same as the quota fixed for the metropolitan area in the State of New South Wales. The figures given by the Opposition he thought worked out to a quota of 2,700 for the metropolitan districts. It would be unfair to rob the agriculturists of the representation they were fairly entitled to. There was a great deal in what the member for Claremont had said. People in the city came in contact with one another, while city people did not know so much about the country. In regard to the mining seats on the Eastern Goldfields, there were Boulder, Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie, Kanowna, Menzies, Yilgarn, Dundas, Hannans, Mount Margaret, Ivanhoe, Brown Hill, and Kurrawang, 12 seats with 38,000 electors, giving a quota of 3,166. This he considered was very fair and reasonable. Then there was the Murchison goldfield, comprising Cue, Mount Margaret, and Murchison with 4,500 electors, three seats with an average of 1,500 electors. There was nothing unreasonable about that. The quota was only about 200 electors more than for the agricultural seats. Then we had to put in the constituencies of Collie and Pilbarra. Those two seats gave an average of 1,621 electors. That made 17 seats for 45,643 electors, or a quota of 2,684. That was for the mining representation in the House. It was idle for members to say that because he happened to represent the coalmining industry he was not in sympathy with the goldmining industry. He challenged any member to point out, except in regard to one question with which he was not in accord with the goldfields, the Esperance railway, any occasion on which he had not advanced as far as possible the interests of the goldfields. The New South Wales quota for the mining industry was 2,706. The Opposition proposed that there should be 18 mining seats, but included in the

Opposition's scheme were Collie and Pilbarra. The Opposition gave an average of electors of 2,536, while the Government proposed to give an average of 2,684, so that on the mining question the Government and the Opposition practically agreed. He expressed his surprise that the member for the Murchison, who was supposed at all times to safeguard the interests of the farmers, as he represented a farming constituency, should support the cross-bench scheme. Perhaps the hon. member might change his opinion before the debate was over.

MR. NANSON: The reason was that he had greater confidence in the people.

MR. EWING: No one had more confidence in the people than he had. The hon. member and his party were doing an absolute injustice to the farming community of the State. The agricultural seats in his opinion were the Murray, Sussex, and the Swan. Then there were the agricultural seats, 13 in number, and the voting power was 18,920, with a quota of 1,455. He did not think it was possible to take as agricultural seats any other than those the Government were proposing to include in the Bill. Then there were the other seats, Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton, three seats for 5,015 electors, giving an average of 1,672. Bunbury, Albany, and Geraldton could not be classed as agricultural seats, for there the interests were purely commercial and shipping. Under the Government scheme he approved of the new electorate called "Forrest" for the reason given by the Premier, that the interests of those who would be in that constituency were entirely separate from the agricultural interest, and it would be a risk for the member for the Murray or Wellington to seek election as a representative of the agricultural interest unless the new constituency were taken out of Murray and Wellington. It was only fair that those seats should be secured to the agricultural interest, because there would otherwise be the danger of reducing the agricultural seats to eight. Nelson was to have the Greenbushes tinfields included in it by the Government scheme, although he regretted that this portion of the South West Mining Electorate was being severed, because it represented some 650 electors on the roll at present, which number might be increased to 800

at the next election. It would be a terrible day when the farming interest in this State had not fair and equitable representation in Parliament; and it might happen that if an agricultural district were dominated by the mining vote, that district would not be able to return an agricultural representative. He hoped the Bill would go through in its entirety, and he would vote for it, taking any risk there might be in doing so.

MR. BATH: When figures were quoted by a member, they should be placed before the House fairly, so as to give a true idea of their effect. The last speaker had taken certain figures from the *Year Book* of New South Wales as showing the number of electors in that State, and he had then compared the scheme of the Premier with the numbers so quoted. If the hon. member desired to make a fair comparison between numbers or quotas of electors in both States, he should take the figures as they were on the present electoral rolls in New South Wales and compare them with the present rolls in this State.

THE PREMIER: If the hon. member did that, the comparison would be more favourable to his argument.

MR. BATH: The Premier could not lead him astray on that point, as he would show by reading from the New South Wales *Hansard* a description of the Redistribution of Seats Bill as it was passed in New South Wales. [Extract read.]

THE PREMIER: That was not taken from the Act in New South Wales, but was a description in the *Hansard* report, and it was not the same as in the Bill when finally passed.

MR. BATH: There was no difference. The description he had quoted stated accurately the effect of representation according to the quota of population in each electoral district, and any anomalies which were found in the quota as it existed were the inevitable result of increase or decrease in particular districts operating before the time at which the commissioners would periodically revise the boundaries for those districts. The Act required that if the variation exceeded the quota by  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. in any electorate, the commissioners must at the end of the first five years revise the boundaries so as to readjust the quota, and must readjust from time to

time. Some of the electorates in New South Wales were as badly placed as were any electorates in this State, especially those which had not railway communication; yet the Act in that State had been rigidly adhered to, and the boundaries had been revised, not entirely on a population basis, but on a scientific basis with a certain well-guarded proviso; and where the commissioners allowed a larger margin in the quota than 600, they had to make a special report of their reasons for doing so in each particular case.

At 6.30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

MR. BATH (continuing): The figures he had quoted showed clearly that while discrepancies in representation might have existed in New South Wales at the time alleged in the *Year Book*, that was not due to any defect in the system, but to the fact that some time had then elapsed since the last redistribution. New South Wales adjusted its electorates on a scientific basis, the primary consideration being population. Power was given the commissioners to show special favour to certain electorates owing to geographical position, want of means of communication, and other disadvantages; but that discretion was definitely restricted to electorates with a certain quota; and where that quota was exceeded the commissioners must state distinctly the reasons which actuated them in making the exception. But could anyone say that this Bill allotted seats on anything like a scientific basis, or with any other object than to conserve the interests of strong and consistent Government supporters? The member for Claremont (Mr. Foulkes) said agricultural interests could not be conserved save by giving them a uniform meed of representation. Surely other means could be found of doing them justice. The trouble arose because in the past, when the agricultural population enjoyed an undue meed of power, they had used it selfishly, unjustly, and without regard to other sections of the community; and the agriculturists were now actuated by a fear that retribution would follow a more equitable distribution of seats. In the East many farming constituencies, especially in New South Wales and South Australia, were

as democratic and as fair to other interests as were the mining and the metropolitan districts in this State. That depended on whether the inhabitants of a district came frequently in contact with each other. The farmers' leagues and co-operative societies of New South Wales resulted in their members taking a much broader outlook; hence they generally threw in their lot with the democratic party. Mining members here, while seeking fairer treatment for their constituencies, did not desire to injure farming districts. Other States which had redistributed on a basis where population was the primary consideration had no cause to complain of the result, nor need there be complaint here. But the agriculturists, while persisting in their present attitude, must expect to arouse contention and disagreement between themselves and the members for populous constituencies which were not given fair representation; for those constituencies would regard with a certain suspicion the representatives of close boroughs. In New Zealand farming constituencies were as liberal as city and mining constituencies, having found from actual experience that the interests of all sections of the community were bound up together, and that only by all-round fairness could the State be made to prosper, and the injustices of the past be wiped out. The cross-bench members who supported the amendment did not wish to obstruct business, but merely to see how many members would range themselves in support of the continuance of the inequalities of the past, and how many desired to place on the statute-book an Act which would give an approximation to an ideal popular representation in this Parliament.

MR. HARPER: The last speaker and many other members strongly attacked the influence which farming communities had in this House, and said that the supporters of the amendment wished to redistribute seats on a scientific basis, so as to give representation of numbers irrespective of their conditions or interests.

MR. BATH: No. They maintained that population should be the primary consideration.

MR. HARPER: Very well. In the history of modern civilisation, a most remarkable feature was that any large

aggregate of people in a municipality became immensely strong and persistent in their attacks on the public purse; and it was a sound principle to give reasonable representation in Parliament to a strong body of those who had not such power, but who had an opportunity of looking at public affairs from a greater distance, and of maintaining the interests of the State against those of populous centres. The farming community had little or no opportunity of making inroads on the public purse. Farmers usually lived apart, had not the opportunities of meeting enjoyed by town residents, and could not frequently use their influence on the Government of the day. This was a danger that every State must realise. If we took the history of municipal government all over the world at the present time, in many cases we found enormous frauds perpetrated under the guise of municipal requirements. Our own State was not free from that. Read the history of municipalities in this State, and it would be rather surprising to members. The City of Perth, some time ago, brought pressure to bear on the Government to purchase the Perth Waterworks at something like double their value; yet there was now a strong desire that the Government should write off a very large sum from the purchase money; that was, to put it on to the general taxpayer. If we bore in mind that the value of property in the city, as he supposed, increased 20 times what it had in the country, it surely was reasonable to say the owners of that property should bear the burden of any mistakes the municipality made. But no; they were constantly coming to the Government to ask for assistance. Furthermore, the municipality of Perth, under an arrangement by which they received a subsidy last year, were reported to have made certain declarations of receipts which would entitle them to get more than their fair share of subsidy; in fact, an act which if done in private life would have placed the operators in a very unpleasant position. Surely where we saw this happening, there was every reason for the Government of the State to provide sufficient checks to prevent these operations from recurring. Let members take Fremantle, another powerful municipality. Perhaps members did not realise

that for years Fremantle stood out against the harbour in the mouth of the river; they were afraid the river might be opened up, and the interests of Fremantle would suffer. For years Fremantle did all it could, and perhaps would have succeeded if there had been a lesser representation of the country in the House, to prevent the railways being for all time burdened with the workshops in one of the very worst places they could be in. It was in the interests of Fremantle to do so, not in the interests of the State. The municipalities should be always watched with a very cautious eye in their demands to get at the public purse. If municipalities had a preponderating influence in the House, we might depend on it they would use that influence; it was human nature that they should. The member for the Murchison waxed very warm about the bad treatment the Geraldton district had received at the hands of the farming community in the southern portion. He did not know that members could lay that particularly to the southern farmers. The facts were rather interesting, because Geraldton made very great demands on the public purse of the State, and had now some very large white elephants in the shape of public buildings erected at a great cost, and which were of very little use to the State. Another remarkable instance in regard to Geraldton was, as he had often pointed out to the late member, that Geraldton could not ask for much more, considering the enormous sum the Government had to pay for the resumption of a few acres of sand on the beach. The debit and credit balance of Geraldton would be rather surprising. The member for Hannans also urged that everything the farmer did was unfair while everything the goldfields members did was fair. All they wanted was a reasonable control of everything in the State. They were always ready to assist the farmer in whatever came before them. The farmer, he thought, would have a very bad time if left to the tender mercies of the goldfields population.

MR. TAYLOR: The goldfields people had never done an injustice to the farmer.

MR. HARPER: Farming representatives were largely responsible for the legislation which gave the goldfields

the Mining Act, which the hon. member for Hannans said the other night was one of the best that any State had. He would like to know where the Coolgardie Water Scheme would have been to-day if it not been for the farming community. He would like to know what consideration the people of the goldfields would have given to the rabbit question if it was left to their sole control. If we took the expressions of the goldfields Press, and that he considered as a fair indication of the feeling of the community, it had always been hostile to the farming community except a few idle words. The question of the tariff they fought all along, since the member for West Perth represented them. He truly fought the elections in the interests of the producing farmer, but ever since the goldfields had been extremely hostile to the farmer. He would like to point out the difference between the farmer asking for protection and the miners asking for protection. The farmer asked for protection to allow the resources of the country to be developed, knowing that the sooner they developed the sooner would they lose the advantage of a protected market.

MR. DAGLISH: When did the farming population ask for the sliding scale?

MR. HARPER: What he was speaking of was the hostility all along. The goldfields people had frequently said there was only one industry in the State which was worth considering, and that was gold-mining.

MR. DAGLISH: One or two people said that, but one swallow did not make a summer.

MR. HARPER: If we were to take the expression that came from the goldfields, and he spoke particularly of those representing the Labour constituencies, they had always been hostile to the farming interest. He made this admission, the goldfields people often said they would do anything to help the farmer, but many of them had said that there was no farming worthy of consideration. The leader of the Labour Party frequently had said that farming had made no progress, therefore nothing had been done to continue the protection. He recollected one member representing the goldfields, the late Mr. Vosper, saying in the House that if it was a question between the miner and the farmer, he would vote

for the miner every time. That member represented a very large constituency and was considered, he believed, a very prominent man. Throughout we had, he contended, through the Press and public speakers, an expression which would not warrant the farming community looking on the goldfields people as the angelic-natured persons which they represented themselves to be. In the interests of the State it was important that the farming industry and the agricultural industry should be able to use that stolid influence, should he called it, of maintaining one steady course that did not belong to the urban population. Urban populations were frequently moved by sentiment—it might be prejudice—which might do good or might do harm, but from the agricultural districts we generally got a solid vote to keep things on the balanced line. They had not that opportunity of warping public opinion, therefore it was dangerous for any State to minimise more than was necessary that influence. The proposition before the Committee was to give the maximum power to the municipalities to enable them to absolutely control the whole policy of the State. That, he contended, was a dangerous thing, and when one bore in mind that a great many of the people, especially on the goldfields, were more or less, he did not say it in an offensive spirit, alien to the State—it might become less—while that spirit remained it was dangerous that they should be given an opportunity of uniting with other municipalities to the danger of the State. He would like to know what the State had done, what this State which was largely controlled by agricultural interests had done, in the matter of public works.

MR. DAGLISH: They would sooner have justice than generosity; the hon. member was still refusing them justice.

MR. HARPER: It was a question as to what one called justice. Just to show from a record of *Hansard* what was the feeling sometimes of large communities, let members read what the hon. member for Hannans said when he was a new member, only a little over a year ago, and certainly that member represented a large number of people, something like 9,000 electors. One must suppose that when he came direct

from his people he knew very well what their sentiments were and represented them in this House. This was what the hon. member said, speaking in this House on the 4th November last year:—

I have always held that the man of property, or the man of wealth, is a greater anarchist than the man who goes round with a bomb—

This was the man representing 9,000 electors, and we had not heard that the hon. member had recalled it any way—

because he usually ends up by sending himself to another sphere in life. But the capitalist, if allowed unrestricted sway, is an anarchist because he is interested in the development of his property or the development of his own wealth at the expense of half the other members of the community. And I think that most capitalists are prepared to put their conscience in cool storage and commit any crime in the calendar for a dividend of 100 per cent.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member (Mr. Bath) had just heard the member for Boulder addressing his electors.

MR. HARPER: It was an old proverb that those who excused themselves accused themselves. Every person with property, never mind if he had only a small holding of a quarter of an acre, was branded by the representative of 9,000 electors as a man whom it was unsafe to trust in regard to having anything to do with the people. If those words were taken as expressing the views of people on the goldfields, it was unsafe to allow municipal and urban populations to have too great an influence in the legislation of this State. The effect would be bound to produce those scandals which had occurred in many large places in the world, especially in America and also in other countries. Altogether apart from the question of the agriculturists as requiring representation, the opportunity that a representative of the farming community and agricultural community had of gaining the ear of the Treasurer was very small indeed compared with that of the municipal representatives. If any public work was decided upon and sanction given to do the work, the Minister was perhaps rung up half a dozen times a week and got a deputation every other week to know why the work was not started immediately, whereas an unfortunate agriculturist might wait six, nine, or 12 months to have his wants

recognised. An instance of this came under his notice not very long ago. A bridge happened to be partially washed away in one of the outlying districts. It was immediately reported to the Public Works Department that it was in a dangerous state, and he believed that it was inspected, but it remained in that state for eight or nine months. What would have taken place if such neglect had occurred in a municipality?

MR. DIAMOND: There was a far worse case at Fremantle at the present time.

MR. HARPER: Fremantle had suffered at the hands of the State! He wondered the hon. member lived in it or represented such a neglected place. He thought that the less Fremantle said about neglect the better. He trusted members would realise that this was something beyond the question of individual representation. There was a State question in this as well as a parochial one. The member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson) asked the Premier the other night if he did not think the people in the towns had sufficient intelligence to exercise their votes safely. The question, however, was not one of intelligence; it was too much intelligence. The towns, of course, attracted to them the keenest intelligence and they used it largely for the benefit of their environments. The resident on the land had not the opportunity of cultivating his intelligence in the same way. Perhaps if he had, he would use it in the same way, but the fact was that the town attracted the smart man, and the smart man always tried to take down both the countryman and the Government.

MR. TAYLOR supported the amendment. To his own knowledge a portion of this State had been crying out for 10 years for a Redistribution of Seats Bill on a population basis. Whilst this amendment did not go as far as the goldfields people desired in that direction, it went farther than this Chamber was likely to agree to. Since this amendment had been moved the Government had been successful in whipping up the halt, maimed, and blind. The leader of the Opposition had told us that the Bill belonged to him. The Bill was brought in by the Premier, and after it had been debated in this Chamber from about half-past four in the afternoon until about a

quarter past seven the following morning, the Government standing firm to their measure during all those hours, in the heat and fire of the debate, the Premier retired and the leader of the Opposition took charge of the Bill. The leader of the Opposition practically censured the Government. The hon. member said: "It is my Bill, but if the Government desire to fall into line with me, well and good. I have not departed from any of my principles in reference to this measure." The Premier realised the power in front of him, and accepted the position taken up by that hon. member without testing the feeling of Parliament. The amendment of the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) allowed the metropolitan area 16 members, the mining area 16, agricultural 14, and the North—that was the pastoral portion of this State—4. The Premier in a speech pointed out that his Bill was better than the amendment; that it gave the goldfields 17. If we counted goldfields in this amendment as the Premier had counted them in his proposal, we should be giving the goldfields 18 members in the amendment. The difference between the Premier's Bill and the amendment was that in the amendment Pilbarra was not counted as a gold-mining centre; neither was Collie counted. The Premier was very particular in setting forth the facts with reference to Greenbushes being a mining centre, and also claiming Collie to be a mining centre or electorate. Pilbarra was common ground. They did not desire or attempt to say that Pilbarra was not a gold-mining electorate, but he questioned whether even the Premier would say that Collie was a mining constituency; that was, if the Minister for Mines would say that the report of the department for 1902 was correct. Statistics were given regarding the number of goldmining areas, the quantity of gold, the amount of work done, and the number of men employed. According to the report there were employed at Greenbushes in 1902 139 men, whereas in 1901 there were 201, there being a decrease of something considerably over 50, and the number was still decreasing. If one was going to say that was a mining centre, with 139 miners there, that person would be easily satisfied as to what a mining

constituency was. We had heard a lot from the member for the South-West Mining District (Mr. Ewing) as to the mining constituency he represented. If the figures were correct that hon. member's mining constituency amounted to 368 miners.

MR. EWING: That was not at all correct.

MR. TAYLOR: Then he would leave the hon. member in the hands of the Minister for Mines, for he took the information from the department, and he was surprised at the hon. member saying it was not correct. The number he mentioned was the number employed in 1902. He had no hesitation in saying that the hon. member's mining operations were not as brisk as they were when this report was compiled. The hon. member knew well that some mines had since been shut down. The Collie Boulder had been shut down, and that did not tend to increase the number working. It was hardly fair for the Premier to set forth that there were 700 miners at Greenbushes.

THE PREMIER: Voters, he said.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member was speaking of mining in the district. He thought the hon. gentleman put forward that there were about 1,800 or 1,900 voters, and that 700 or 800 were actually miners.

MR. EWING: That was quite true.

MR. TAYLOR: The member for the South-West Mining electorate set forth that there were something over 2,000 at Collie, and it was a mining electorate. That was misleading to the Chamber.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: How many miners were in Mt. Margaret?

MR. TAYLOR: Mt. Margaret was not the question. He was dealing with the statements made by the Premier and the member for South-West Mining, misleading statements. If he made a statement about Mt. Margaret, the Minister for Mines could look up the statistics and tell members that the statement was wrong. The Premier desired to impress upon the Committee that there were 700 miners at Greenbushes.

THE PREMIER: Greenbushes contained 680 voters.

MR. TAYLOR: They were all miners.

THE PREMIER: How could they be all miners with women voters? It showed how unscrupulous the hon. member was.

MR. TAYLOR: Though the Premier had made a wild statement, it was not with malicious intent, but at the same time the Premier had tried to mislead the Committee, and the truthful gentleman representing South-West Mining was in a similar boat. Probably, if much was made of these statistics, the hon. member (Mr. Ewing) would advise the Minister not to get them out; but he could not claim that 300 votes at Greenbushes, the votes of miners, could influence the electors.

MR. DIAMOND: There were not 200 miners at Greenbushes.

MR. TAYLOR: The desire of the Premier was patent. He wished to disfranchise workers as much as possible so that they would not have much representation in the House. He knew full well that once the Labour men went before their constituencies they would come back, not pledged to the James Government or the "codlin moth" Ministry, but as a party to represent the people who sent them, an independent party. They would not attach themselves either to the "anti-codlin moth" party on the Opposition side. The member for Beverley was very particular to say that the gold-mining centres had always been hostile to the agriculturists. He (Mr. Taylor) would deny that, and would challenge the hon. gentleman to show where he (Mr. Taylor), since he had been in the House, had voted in hostility to the agriculturist. The hon. member for West Perth had been in the House for nine years, and for six years had been a direct representative of the miners. Yet there was no warmer supporter of the agriculturist. One needed only to take a trip to Albany to see how lavishly the agricultural centres had been dealt with in the way of facilities on the railway.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: They were provided by the old company.

MR. TAYLOR: Two years ago he had visited Katanning, and was struck with the magnificent platforms, and over-head bridge, and accommodation far better than was provided at Kalgoorlie. It would suggest to a stranger that the

member for that district must have been a Commissioner of Railways.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was not fair.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The hon. member was deliberately false in the matter. The station at Katanning had not been touched by the Government. Not one shilling had been spent by the Government on the station since the line was bought from the land company.

MR. TAYLOR: The matter could be easily settled. On Tuesday he would call for returns showing how the money had been spent. The member for Beverley had pointed out that the farmers were so far from the centre of Government that they were not able to get near the public purse. For a number of years there had been £10,000 to £15,000 a year spent on drainage alone. There was a contract now let for £8,000.

MR. BURGESS: That was opening up new country.

MR. TAYLOR: No facilities were given to the goldfields for the opening up of new country.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: There was the railway.

MR. TAYLOR: The goldfields paid for the railway. They had practically paid for all the railways they got, and the railway from Fremantle to the goldfields was the only railway paying. The goldfields were carrying the whole of the railway system on their back. The consumers paid for the line.

THE PREMIER: There was the railway to Nannine.

MR. TAYLOR: That was only of mushroom growth. The people did not know it was there yet. It was idle for the member for Beverley to say that the goldfields had been hostile, and that the farmers had not had a fair deal. The farmer had been more spoon-fed in this State than in any other State.

MR. BURGESS: That was nonsense.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. gentleman had never been anywhere to see anything. One gauged his intelligence and travel from the remark he had made, when he compared the member for Kalgoorlie to a block of quartz out of which they cyanided gold.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was out of order. He must not address a member across the floor.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member for Beverley had stated that the Labour party were hostile to capital. The hon. member had many times railed against monopolists, who were only capitalists. What was the position the journal with which he was connected took up against the shipping companies? It stated that they were monopolists trying to ruin the country, and the hon. member did not prevent that statement getting in his paper. The hon. member said that the Press invariably was a reflex of public opinion. He said that the goldfields Press was hostile to the agricultural areas of the State. The *Kalgoorlie Miner* said in a recent issue:—

The whole basis of the Bill brought in by Mr. James is rotten, for he gives votes to acres, and not to human beings, and by some contortions of argument he seeks to show that districts where large populations will not congregate should be better represented than districts teeming with people. Truly the Transvaal Kruger was a fair and honest man compared with the Kruger of Western Australia.

THE PREMIER: That was the best recommendation the Bill had ever had.

MR. TAYLOR: The member for Beverley said that the Press was a reflex of public opinion. If that was the goldfields opinion of the Premier's measure, he (Mr. Taylor) would vote as the people desired. He did not know how the member for Dundas was going to reconcile his attitude with this opinion. By the amendment the people in the metropolitan and goldfields centres would have the representation for which they had long been looking. When the goldfields were grouped as one centre, they had not a fair representation; and one could see no possible way of getting better representation. The suggestion from the cross benches was a far more democratic redistribution than that proposed by the Government. Bunbury, Geraldton, and Albany were as much agricultural electorates as Boulder and Kalgoorlie were goldfields. Boulder was a municipality representing nothing but commercial interests, and Kalgoorlie was in a similar position. If these two electorates were going to be called goldfields electorates, it would be equally as fair to call Bunbury, Albany, and Geraldton agricultural electorates, because Boulder and Kalgoorlie lived by the goldfields, and Geraldton, Bunbury, and Albany lived by the

farming community. It was but fair to group Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton as agricultural, bringing agricultural representation, according to the amendment, up to 14 seats, the goldfields up to 18 including Pilbarra and Collie, and the metropolis to 16. That was the most equitable scheme for the Assembly as now constituted. The Premier had grown tired of his old cry "The Bill to the people;" but if it were submitted to the people they would demand an even more popular representation than the amendment proposed. The member for Boulder (Hon. J. M. Hopkins) asks why he was not supported last session? Because there was not time. The hon. member, armed with a map and a fire-stick, rushed away to his constituency with the idea of "raising Cain." The alluvial trouble and the umbrella trick were nothing to his agitation. His cry was "Redistribution of seats on a population basis; out go the Government." But his constituents did not take him seriously; so he determined to join the Government, which carried too many guns for him. The hon. member was blown out, else he (Mr. Taylor) would have joined him. The member for Menzies (Hon. H. Gregory) was reported by the local paper to have said, "The farming element is ruining this country;" and he went to the Assembly to throw out Sir John Forrest. Both members were now in Ministerial chairs, and their pledges to the people were forgotten. Would the latter say that he did not come here pledged to the abolition of the food duties, or pledged to support the Esperance railway? He was absolutely pledged to redistribution of seats on a population basis.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: That was untrue.

MR. TAYLOR accepted the Minister's denial; though the Minister was undoubtedly pledged to abolish the food duties, and to vote for the Esperance railway.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: True.

MR. TAYLOR: Then the Minister had broken his pledges.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Certainly not.

MR. TAYLOR: This was the first Chamber in the world in which the Government had a section of its sup-

porters sitting in the Opposition. The Premier deserved no credit for persuading the leader of the Opposition to support the Bill. The leader of the Opposition took charge of the Bill and of the Government, and at his request the Premier would at any time climb down. Members supporting the amendment represented 54,800 voters; the codlin moth crowd represented 38,900, and the anti-codlin moths 21,900. Seventeen or 18 members supporting the amendment represented 54,800 out of 115,000 electors—almost half. That in itself was a reason for passing the amendment. It was opposed by those who represented property; but this should not be, though it was, the property House. The Upper House was that in which property should be represented; while this was the people's legislative hall. By a property Chamber he meant one representing the property vote; this House should represent the personal franchise. Much had been made of a statement of the member for Hannans (Mr. Bath), who when making it 10 months ago spoke metaphorically and for the sake of drawing an illustration. When he (Mr. Taylor) heard the hon. member's statement last November, he did not expect that it would remain so long unnoticed, but rather that it would be thrown in the hon. member's teeth. Only by a fluke was it discovered, marked in *Hansard*, and read to the Committee. Its discovery did not alter the truth that the hon. member represented 9,000 people, while other members represented 200 or 300. Was not that anomaly a reason why the Bill should be altered? And it could not be effectively altered save as the amendment indicated. He (Mr. Taylor) would not agree to the suggestion that the discussion should close to-night. If any member wished to speak on this important measure this was the time. No legislation which could be passed this session was more vital to the people than a Redistribution Bill; and any member who wished to place power in the hands of the people should by voice and vote support the amendment. If he (Mr. Taylor) saw an opportunity of speaking again to-night or to-morrow, he would speak. He had always maintained that the people should rule in this Chamber; this was an opportunity of expressing that view, and he would not fail to

express it. The members for Cue and West Perth evidently felt the accusation of the metropolitan Press that the time of the country was being wasted; but when the people were being robbed of their franchise and their popular representation members were not wasting the time of the country by championing popular rights.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** There had not been the slightest intention on his part to speak on the question, but he wished to remind members of an incident which occurred last week when this matter was being discussed, and when the member for Mount Margaret made a statement which was untrue and the member for Kanowna rose in his place and stated that it was a deliberate untruth. The member for Mount Margaret had made a recapitulation of that statement to-night.

**MR. MORAN:** Was the Minister in order in stating that what the member had said was deliberately untrue?

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** The remark was withdrawn. Politically there was a gross misstatement. It was quite characteristic of the member for Mount Margaret to state that when he (the Minister) came here he was pledged to abolish the food duties.

**MR. TAYLOR:** What he said was that the hon. member was pledged to his constituents, but the hon. member had any amount of time to change his opinion.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** This statement was made when he came fresh from his constituents in regard to representation on a population basis. In 1899 when the Bill was before the House he (the Minister) then said:—

I do not altogether believe in giving representation on the basis of population. That would not be fair, because we cannot look for as large populations in the agricultural districts as are found in the metropolitan and the goldfields districts; and agricultural districts should, no doubt, have reasonable representation.

Then again, before going back to his constituents, he also made these remarks:—

We on the goldfields do not ask for representation on the basis of population, but representation on a fair and equitable basis.

He only wished to mention these things to show the class of statement which the member for Mt. Margaret made. There had been an awful lot of noise by the

hon. member as to the different representation given to people under the Bill. Under the terms which the member had stated the goldfields would get one member more than was proposed by the Bill. That was all the difference so far as the goldfields were concerned.

**MR. TAYLOR:** We were reducing the agricultural vote.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Under this Bill the Government proposed, including Pilbarra, to give the mining constituencies 17 members. He insisted that Pilbarra should be classed as a mining seat. At the first election when Mr. Kingsmill was elected he was returned by a majority of miners, and one felt sure the present member for Pilbarra would assert that the miners had far and away the control of the district. Under the Bill the mining districts would have the chance of returning 17 members to Parliament. In 1893 there were only two mining members in the House.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** There was Kimberley.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Kimberley was essentially a pastoral district. We might just as well contend that Nelson was a mining district because there were a number of miners in it.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Mr. Keep, who represented Pilbarra, was one of the mining members of the House.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Under the Bill we had the greatest proportion of representation according to interests. The goldfields returned 17 members; metropolitan district, 13; and the agriculturists, to his mind, only had 10 members in the House. It was futile for members to say that Bunbury, Geraldton, and Albany were not controlled by the traders and workers in those ports. There was a big shipping and commercial trade in these places, and these interests controlled the vote and not the agricultural industry. Geraldton was a shipping place, but the interests were more mining than agricultural because a greater proportion of the business was done with miners than with agriculturists; therefore, if members wished to class this place differently, far from being a port Geraldton should be classed as a mining electorate, but that would be absurd. Geraldton was essen-

tially a commercial seat and should be classed altogether apart from agricultural representation. The Government desired to give fair and equitable representation; the Bill had been brought in to get rid of the anomalies that existed. We could not have a fresh election with the districts existing as at present, for there were Hannans with 9,000 electors and North Perth with something like 7,000. A necessity existed for a Redistribution of Seats Bill. We had not only to consider population but the various interests of the State. The first time he addressed his constituents he realised that interest should have representation as well as population. The last occasion when a Constitution Bill was before the House the member for West Perth increased the number of provinces in the Upper House from 24 to 30.

MR. MORAN: To give the goldfields three seats.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The member's proposal was voted against by the other goldfields members.

MR. MORAN: No. How was it carried?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: *Hansard* would show that. The difference between the cross-bench party and the Government was simply that the Government desired to give representation to the agriculturists, but the cross-bench party said they wished to take it away from the agriculturists and give it to the metropolitan area. He could not agree with that principle. We were wiser in trying to separate these interests. Let members take any of the other States. There was Victoria, with nearly half the population resident in and around Melbourne, but the metropolis only had 25 to 27 members out of 95 members. There was no desire to give such large representation to the metropolis as in Victoria. Take any of the other States. In Queensland we saw anomalies existed. There were Fitzroy and Toowoomba, one with 1,300 electors and the other 2,600; while in other electorates there were 845 electors, 651, and 455. There was one constituency with 2,678 electors, another with only 455. Then in South Australia similar anomalies existed. No one tried to work out a scientific system; the other States gave greater representation to the agricultural districts than to the metropolis. In New South Wales

the same anomalies existed. There were Balmain with 4,100 electors, and Wentworth with 1,726.

MR. BATH: But they increased the representation every five years.

THE PREMIER: This was the scheme to-day. The Minister was giving the last adjustment.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: If there was a change every census, then anomalies might exist for 10 years. If we had a principle of that sort here he would like to know what position the electorate of Hannans would be in?

MR. BATH: We would have an equitable representation if we had the same system.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: If the population doubled, what would happen? The anomaly would exist until the next census was taken.

MR. BATH: Under the New South Wales Act if at the end of five years the percentage had increased in one electorate, it was adjusted.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: In New South Wales there was Balmain with 4,082 electors, against Uralla with 1,828; and Leichhardt with 3,769 as against Tenterfield with 1,735. Even if that State tried to carry out representation on a population basis, it failed to do so. In Victoria there were Daylesford with 6,000 electors, and Normanby with 2,600. There were anomalies in every case. The system which the Government endeavoured to work out was the best. Where the population was central, there the quota worked out large. On the goldfields the quota was smaller, and in the agricultural districts it was still lower, and much less in the North. He hardly knew how the member for Mt. Margaret and the member for North Murchison would be able to agree over this representation scheme on a population basis, because if the scheme were to be adopted the Mt. Margaret electorate would have to be cut into several pieces, while portions would have to be added to the district of North Murchison.

MR. TAYLOR: Let the power be placed in the hands of the people.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: That scheme he was afraid would not be agreed to by all Murchison members, otherwise we should find that they would have considerably less representation

in the new Parliament than in the present. He supposed they were quite satisfied with the representation given to the Murchison Goldfields. The North Murchison district had about 1,300 electors and Mount Magnet not a very large population.

MR. HOLMAN: Let the hon. gentleman tell us how many on the Irwin. The hon. gentleman did not talk about those places.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Under the proposal of the Government we were increasing the size of the Irwin district, but, as he said before, the quota was less than in other cases. The hon. member said that we must give representation on the basis of population.

MR. HOLMAN: No one had ever said that in the House.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It had never been said.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor) accused him (the Minister) of saying he desired the representation to be on a population basis. We had never heard that on the goldfields representation should be absolutely on a population basis. There should be a larger number of electors per member in the East Coolgardie field than we should ask for in the case of the Kanowna, Menzies, or Mount Margaret districts. We had managed in the last few years to give to the mining population the preponderance of power in this House. We gave them 17 members in a House of 50. The Government had no desire whatever to reduce the representation on the Murchison fields. It was wise they should have the representation, because he knew the vast area and extent of those districts. But if we were to bring down some scheme of representation only upon the basis of population those fields must suffer, because they would not be able to give the quota that would be demanded under a scheme that would be required on a population basis alone.

MR. WALLACE: The Murchison representatives were not fighting for the goldfields only, but for the interests of the North.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: They wanted, he had thought, representation on a population basis. He did not think

the party were fighting for the North especially, because the Government were not desirous of injuring the North, but said they would give four members, including one for Pilbarra. All that the party were desirous of doing at the present time was to give greater representation to the metropolitan districts and take that representation away from the agricultural districts. That was the clear-cut issue with regard to the amendment. If any member would take a copy of *Hansard* and read the list of members of the Assembly, how many would he find who had interests in Perth at the present time? There were 32, and he did not count such members as the representatives of Mount Margaret, Kanowna, and Kalgoorlie, who of course were compelled to live down here to attend to their business. There was also that increased representation of interests by which a member must always be infected who was continually in touch with the people in the metropolis. The people in Perth and the surrounding district must always be represented, because there was always so much extra representation in the House in addition to the direct representation they had. He had often heard members complain of the system of centralisation, it being said that we were trying to bring everything to the metropolis. He had heard the member for Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor) say that; yet the hon. member was now going for a scheme to give the metropolis greater representation in this House than ever it had before. We were asked to take away from agricultural districts three members and add them to the metropolis. That was not necessary. In closely settled districts such as this we gave them representation by 13 members, and with the indirect representation they had they were indeed fully represented in this House.

MR. FIGOTT: When he received the intimation that a new scheme of redistribution was going to be placed before the House by the cross-benches he was exceedingly pleased. He had awaited the development of that scheme with great pleasure, because he for one had known right throughout this discussion that no matter what scheme was brought before the House it could be attacked almost from every quarter. We had listened to

the quotations from *Hansard* which had shown so clearly that two out of the leaders of this new party had proved themselves inconsistent in this matter of redistribution, not at one time only but many within the last twelve months. He referred to the member for Murchison (Mr. Nanson), and the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran).

MR. THOMAS: The member for Cue was the worst of the lot.

MR. PIGOTT: When he heard that a leader had been chosen to develop this scheme, to bring it to perfection, and to hand it to the Committee, and when he heard that the leader was the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth), he thought that at any rate we should have some show that the hon. member could remain consistent for twelve months. He was not going to quote from *Hansard* against the hon. member, but he had the hon. member's speech which was delivered on the 27th July, 1902, which was little more than twelve months ago, in which he proposed to this House a scheme of redistribution that he himself recommended to the Leake Government as being the only fair and equitable scheme that could possibly be devised. In this scheme the hon. member proposed that there should be an Assembly of 42 members. Was that correct?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Yes; the hon. member was generally correct.

MR. PIGOTT: On this occasion he would be absolutely correct. According to the hon. member's scheme 13 of those 42 members were to be goldfields representatives; not mining but goldfields. There was to be one member for Albany, which under that scheme he did not consider an agricultural district, but which he now said was an agricultural district.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: In that scheme he did not consider Fremantle as metropolitan.

MR. PIGOTT: That would be referred to by him later on, but here we came to the first inconsistency. The next item was Geraldton, and according to the hon. member to-day that was an agricultural constituency. The hon. member was consistent in this, that he proposed then that four seats should be given to Fremantle, and it appeared that to-day he proposed that four should be given to Fremantle. The hon. member also suggested that 11

seats should be given to the agricultural districts, and to-day he brought forward this new scheme and gave 11 representatives out of a larger assemblage.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The proportions were exactly the same as he now proposed.

MR. PIGOTT: We would work out the proportion. We would take the goldfields. The hon. member said they should have 13 seats out of 42. If one applied that proportion he would find that the same proportion out of 50 was 16, and what did we find in the Bill now before the House but 16 mining seats? According to the member for Cue we could go a little farther. The hon. member said 11 seats should be given to the agricultural party, and when we took the proportion and applied that to 50 members we found that the agricultural party should get 13 seats. Why could not the hon. member be consistent just for one little time? Why should he not take the trouble to go into this Bill and work out the proportions, and then, if he had been honest in his convictions, instead of endeavouring, for party purposes, just in order to put himself before the public, to use a certain section of this House as a tool for his own ends and to bring himself before his electors, whom he was afraid of at the present day, he would not have gone into this sort of thing, but have solidly supported the proposals now in the Bill.

MR. NANSON: The hon. member was using the Government as a tool.

MR. PIGOTT: If he was using the Government as a tool for bringing about his own wishes, he was not to be blamed; he was consistent. But the member for Cue was not consistent. What the member for Cue approved of 12 months ago, he disapproved of to-day. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: No.] The hon. member said "No." Sixteen was the number to be given to the goldfields, and he (Mr. Pigott) submitted that 16 seats would be considered a fair thing to-day in a House of 50, if 13 was a fair thing in a House of 42.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That was what was proposed in the new scheme.

MR. PIGOTT: What he was referring to was the present scheme, which provided for 16 mining seats, because the

hon. member would not acknowledge Collie.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It had been acknowledged by him all the time.

MR. PIGOTT said he would go into another detail in the hon. member's scheme. The hon. member said that the goldfields members would each represent an average of 2,719 people. He (Mr. Pigott) challenged any member of the House to go through the figures put before us by the employees of the State, calculating the number of the people in each of the new electorates as laid down in this Bill, and deny that the number for each representative that was any fair quota for the 16 seats allotted by the Bill at the present time was anything else than 2,700. The hon. member was making a noise because there was a difference of 19 electors for each mining representative. It was most peculiar how these figures fitted in so well. That finished the goldfields. He would next turn to the agricultural seats. Last year the hon. member proposed that we should have 11 agricultural seats, each member representing 1,374 votes. As 11 was to 42, so was 13 to 50. The present Bill provided for 13 agricultural seats.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Government had evidently copied his scheme.

MR. PIGOTT: The hon. member was now going back on his own scheme.

MR. MORAN: What had the Government proposed previously?

MR. PIGOTT: That question did not arise at the present moment. What the Government had proposed had simply been wiped out. He desired to pin this matter down in the mind of the member for Cue. Last year he said that each agricultural representative should be elected by 1,374 voters. Under the present Bill we had 13 representatives of farming, each representing 1,400 people, a difference of 26 for each member. Yet the hon. member objected to the Bill of to-day. The goldfields and the agricultural areas had been disposed of in turn. The Bill proposed to have three seats for the North. The hon. member proposed last year to have five pastoral seats. One could understand Pilbarra being included, but could not understand where the hon. gentleman got the fifth seat from. It was the only seat which he (Mr. Pigott) could not fit into the scheme. This dis-

posed of 13 goldfields seats, 11 agricultural seats, and three Northern seats, making a total of 27. Albany and Geraldton brought the total to 29, which did not leave many more to be considered. With regard to the ports, the hon. member proposed to give four seats to Fremantle, and with regard to the city and suburbs seven, making a total of 11. If the proportion was applied this would come to 13, just as was provided in the Bill.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was not known to him that his scheme had been copied.

MR. PIGOTT: It was a remarkable thing the hon. gentleman did not recognise his scheme when it was before the House. The hon. gentleman had proposed that the 11 metropolitan members should each represent 2,990 votes. The Bill made the same number, each to represent 3,200. That was the only difference in the two schemes.

MR. MORAN: This was the first clear exposition of the Bill. The hon. gentleman should have spoken earlier.

MR. PIGOTT: Having been through the Bill and having altered it to his own liking, he understood it, and was aware that the members for Cue and the Murchison were going to dip themselves into the mud. It was not his business to hold them up. The figures could be inspected by anybody, and, if members desired to refer to *Hansard*, they would find what he had referred to on page 247 of last year's reports. When the member for Cue turned up his speeches on redistribution, he had forgotten that he had ever made the speech which he (Mr. Pigott) was quoting. Members who had been gulled by the member for Cue in the matter would see that the hon. gentleman did not really believe in the scheme he had brought forward to-day. When the hon. gentleman went through his previous scheme and applied it to the present Bill, he should be man enough to stand up and admit his error, and give his support to the Bill in its present condition. He (Mr. Pigott) did not intend to deal farther with the hon. member, and did not intend to travel over the pages of *Hansard*, quoting the hon. gentlemen who were opposed to the Bill. It was the duty of every member, however, to remember that, in framing a Redistribution of Seats Bill, the only

chance Western Australia had of progressing at the rate it ought was to have a House based on a scheme of representation which would make it a certainty that no policy of centralisation would ever exist.

MR. BATH: It should be a House "broad-based on the people's will."

MR. PIGOTT: No scheme on a population basis would ever go through, and if the State were to be helped to progress in the way it ought to be helped, we must not consider because there was a huge population in one centre, that centre was to rule the country. We wanted members from all parts and all districts to have sufficient power that, when they were in the House, their voices could be heard, and would not be drowned by the clamour of the representatives of populous centres.

MR. DAGLISH: The hon. member wanted an oligarchy.

MR. PIGOTT: A great deal could be said as to what were metropolitan, agricultural, and pastoral districts. The scheme before the House was a fair scheme, but in order to get the opinion of members of this new party (he would not call them cave-dwellers, because he thought it an insulting name), he would ask them, while he gave his view of the present Bill, to correct him when he clashed with their opinions as to the true definition of the seats provided for in the Bill. First of all, Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Brownhill, Ivanhoe, Hannans, Menzies, Mount Margaret, Yilgarn, Kanowna, the Murchison (as it was now constituted), Dundas, Magnet, Cue, and Kurrajong were all mining seats. [MR. MORAN: That was quite correct.] Was Pilbarra a mining seat? [MR. MORAN: Certainly.] The next was Collie: was that a mining seat? [MR. MORAN: I do not think so.] That could be kept in mind for the present. There was a difference in one seat. The next question was, what were the metropolitan and suburban seats. Perth, North Perth, West Perth, South Perth, Balcatta, the four Fremantles, Guildford, and Canning were metropolitan centres.

MR. MORAN: Guildford was a purely agricultural seat.

MR. PIGOTT: If one thing had condemned the scheme propounded by the member for Cue, the remarks of the member for West Perth had done it.

An agricultural member could go to Guildford, but he would not be elected with the workshops at Midland Junction.

MR. MORAN: The promised workshops.

MR. PIGOTT: They were very nearly there at the present time.

MR. MORAN: Did the hon. member think a Labour man could be elected at Guildford?

MR. PIGOTT: That had nothing to do with the question. Guildford was as sensible as any other part of the country, and would return the man best fitted to represent it. He (Mr. Pigott) would not have brought in the names at all, but no scheme could be brought forward which was not on these terms. The only other scheme would be purely on a population basis. Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton were ports. There might be a difference on these seats. Two of them had been called ports by the member for Cue. Speaking last year that gentleman had said, "We next propose to give six seats to the ports, Fremantle, South Fremantle, North Fremantle, East Fremantle, Albany, and Geraldton." The hon. member could not now say he had classed them as agricultural seats last year. Probably the new party claimed Bunbury as an agricultural seat. It was a moot point whether it was or not. Each side might hold its own opinion on that matter.

MR. MORAN: It did not matter.

MR. PIGOTT: Regarding the pastoral seats, all agreed these were Kimberley, Roebourne, and Cossack. There was no difference on that point. This left to be considered the famous agricultural seats, Irwin, Greenough, Toodyay, Swan, Murray, Northam, York, Beverley, Williams, Katanning, Nelson, Sussex, and Wellington.

MR. MORAN: Did the hon. member call Northam an agricultural seat?

MR. PIGOTT: It was a big town in the midst of an agricultural district, and all in Northam were wrapped up in agriculture.

MR. TAYLOR: It was exactly the same as Bunbury.

MR. PIGOTT: Bunbury was quite different. That was another seat left out. These 13 new constituencies contained 18,500 people, or an average of 1,423 each. He admitted that he, when appointed to the select committee to con-

sider this Bill, was about the biggest novice in the House in the matter of redistribution; but he maintained that no man in his senses could assert that the Assembly could be constituted on a population basis. The object was to secure a policy which would send the country ahead; and the policy of the Government would always depend on the class of members returned. He maintained that every industry in the State should have as nearly as possible an equal voice in the House; not that a small industry should have as many representatives as gold-mining, but representatives with an equal power to state its views. To a great extent he agreed with the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) that there should not be any enmity between the various sections of the community; but there was rivalry between the populous centres, mainly at present between the goldfields and the metropolis. The metropolitan area and the large centres on the goldfields were almost equally populous; therefore, by giving them an equal number of members, justice would be done to both. Representing a pastoral industry, and another industry which had no friends in this State because it employed black labour, he knew that if he wanted any assistance for the North he must go to the goldfields members, who, though they represented not the goldfields but the Labour party, must work hand-in-glove with the North because the interests of both, though not identical, never clashed. It was to the interest of the goldfields that the North should go ahead, and *vice versa*. That was why he never raised his voice when the far North, practically half the area of this State, give away one of its representatives every time a Redistribution Bill was brought in. Because, were there only one representative of the North and were he worth his salt, he could always obtain the assistance of goldfields members.

MR. WALLACE: Why not say that of the metropolitan members also?

MR. PIGOTT: Because metropolitan members in this as in every other State were all for centralisation. He assured goldfields members that in this matter they had been made tools of and hoodwinked. They were getting a sop in the shape of one member, while either two or

three members were given to the only enemies they ever had, if any—the metropolitan constituencies. That was a summary of the Bill. In considering the matter he had decided that the goldfields and the metropolitan areas should have equal representation; and they had it by the Bill.

MR. MORAN: Surely 13 and 16 were not equal?

MR. PIGOTT: Equal in this respect, that an analysis of the population would show that the large centres on the goldfields and the metropolitan centres should have exactly the same number of representatives. The outlying goldfields districts got an extra member or two, like the outlying districts round the metropolis. Then the agricultural districts and the ports must have representation; and though it might appear that 13 members were too many for 18,500 people, still this extra representation would be for the benefit of the country. In giving them 13 members, the districts had been lumped together, and the constituencies so formed as to make the representation fair. And if members looked at the number of electors in each of these agricultural districts, there was not any great difference. The average number of voters was 1,420; and the largest constituency was that which the member for West Perth claimed as an urban constituency. But granting the hon. member's contention, none had seen his scheme. Would he disfranchise Northam? The new scheme had not been properly unfolded or put before the House; but there was no occasion to unfold it.

MR. MORAN: Not till now had the Government scheme been unfolded.

MR. PIGOTT said he would have spoken earlier in the debate; but he had waited to hear what was the new party's scheme, though he was disappointed, for the only explanation was that its advocates intended to cut out some of the few agricultural seats, give one extra to the goldfields and three extra to the metropolitan districts. And they had managed for some unknown reason to catch the goldfields votes. The new scheme could not be compared to anything but one of those eggs sometimes laid in captivity by a forlorn parrot—an egg containing no germs which could ever by any means be hatched, and the sight of which made

a man wonder how any bird could be so foolish, so utterly degraded, as to go to the trouble of laying it.

**MR. FERGUSON:** When the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) spoke last week on the Transcontinental Railway Bill, he assailed federalists for having allowed the State to enter the Commonwealth without securing a written promise that the line should be constructed; and certainly they had no right to take that on trust. When the hon. member spoke on this Bill on Tuesday last he advocated a principle of universal trust. The agricultural members were to trust the town members and the goldfields members; the goldfields members were to trust the metropolitan members, and there was to be a general trust all round. The millennium had not yet come. The lambs from the agricultural districts were not going to lie down with the lions and wolves in the metropolitan and goldfields areas. Since the discussion began we had been surfeited with figures, and members who had undertaken to give statistics had not got anyone to agree with them. No two members agreed. Members who had spoken on the Bill had abandoned any fixed rule as a basis for representation; they had abandoned population, interest, and territory, and as a matter of fact it resolved itself into a question of expediency only. What each member had to do was to decide for himself what was an equality basis. We had to consider the present position of this State, with its immense territory and mineral possibilities—and in referring to the mineral possibilities he had in mind the Pilbarra field with a prospect of large increase of population. If the Pilbarra field was to break out as the Kalgoorlie field did, we could not over-estimate the importance which the agricultural industry would become to the State, and anything which could be done to encourage agriculture should be done. He had in his mind what was the position of the country when the Kalgoorlie field broke out and our inability to produce anything like the food-stuffs required. It would have been a menace to the State if one or two of the intercolonial steamers had broken down. We would have been within the limits of starvation if a month passed without a

steamer arriving from the other States. We could not over-estimate the importance of the agricultural industry to the State. The member for Northam, when Minister for Lands, did a great deal for agriculture, and the present Minister for Lands had done the same. Now we were reaping the benefits of the agricultural development which was going on so rapidly in the southern and western districts; let us hope the same development would shortly appear on the agricultural land to the north of Perth, along the Midland Railway and up to the Murchison. With the same development to the north of Perth as had occurred to the south of it, we could look forward to holding our own and be somewhat of a self-contained State if our population increased rapidly. We should look at the matter in a broad light. It was not an electorate question, but it was a State question, and we should give liberal representation in both Houses to the agricultural industry. The trend of legislation in any Parliament was in accordance with the views of members. If in a Parliament there was undue goldfields representation—and he did not think the goldfields had an undue representation—the legislation passed would favour the goldfields. If on the other hand we had an undue commercial element in the Parliament, then legislation would turn towards favouring commerce. If we had a House in which the agricultural interest was not well represented, the agricultural interest could not fail to suffer. A good deal had been said about being afraid to trust the people. Why should members in the metropolis or on the goldfields in a case of a redistribution of seats be afraid to give their votes in favour of liberal representation to agriculture?

**MR. NANSON:** Why did the hon. member refuse to give liberal representation to the towns?

**MR. FERGUSON:** We had it. We paid a very poor compliment to the intelligence and thoughtfulness of the electors if we thought they did not see this matter in a broad light, if we thought they would not allow their members to vote from a State point of view rather than from the point of view of the electorate. In giving a vote for the Bill as it was before the House he did not

feel in the slightest degree afraid of his electors disapproving of what he did. The electors knew if any great depression came to the agricultural industry they would be the first to feel it, and any person engaged in commerce in this State or any other State knew that the first thing that put any pressure on commercial matters was a depression in agriculture. A depression in the gold-mining industry would likewise influence the metropolitan electorates, and he took it that the electors in the metropolitan districts saw that as clearly as we did.

MR. BATH: They should give us liberal representation then.

MR. FERGUSON: The goldfields had it. It was not a question of the goldfields having liberal representation. The representation the goldfields were getting under the Bill could be seen, and he was not aware the goldfields thought the representation inadequate.

MR. BATH: What were they fighting for then?

MR. FERGUSON: So that the agriculturist should not get more. We could well afford a member to the agricultural interest. From all we had heard, members had made up their minds, and no amount of talking would alter their decision.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: It was to be regretted that this discussion had developed into what might be termed a wrangle, pitting one industry against another. After all the object of the Assembly was to seriously consider the question of the fair and equitable representation of the people of the State. In regard to the opinions he had expressed previously as to the proportion which should be fairly represented and the number of members allotted to those portions of the country, it was hardly necessary for him again to repeat what he stated previously on the matter; but as some time had elapsed since the matter was touched upon, and as we had heard speeches from various speakers who had taken up the views of the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth), perhaps in the interests of some of the smaller populated districts he might again touch upon the points alluded to on a previous occasion. A great deal had been said in regard to the inadequate representation given to the goldfields and the metro-

politan districts by the select committee. The select committee were elected by the House to present to the House, after having made due inquiry, their opinion in regard to what should be considered proper representation. They had given their report, and in his opinion the report should have been adopted, perhaps with some slight modification, if thought necessary. It might well have been considered by the House and have been adopted after mature consideration. We had discussed the question for some days, and did not appear very much nearer arriving at a point which would enable us to decide the question; but so much had been said by the various representatives of the different sections of the people that it was easy to judge what would be the result of the voting. In regard to agricultural districts, no definite proposal had been put forward by the member for Cue, but one understood that those members who formed the section which we might term the reform section in their opinion intended to amalgamate certain agricultural districts, and to give the number of members cut out by such amalgamation to the goldfields and metropolitan area. In regard to the amalgamation dealing with his own district—the district of the Great Southern Railway and Albany—by the proposal of last year the Plantagenet district was abandoned and the Williams district was to be extended south, embracing a portion of Plantagenet, and the Albany district was to embrace the other portion. If we took the federal rolls we should find that the numbers which would be embodied in those two districts would be 5,109, so that dividing the number equally it would give 2,500 electors in each of those two new districts. It might fairly be claimed that the member for that district to which he referred should be restored. That was the reason why the select committee stated that a new district should be formed, and that instead of there being two districts as proposed by the original Bill, there should be three. If we had the three districts there would be an average representation of 1,700, and in his opinion that was a fair number. He had seen it stated in the Press, and it had often been stated in this House, that the number of electors upon the Williams roll to-day was 1,074. The

number on the federal rolls was 2,119, therefore it would be seen that since the old rolls were framed there had been an increase of 100 per cent. What he asked for the district he had mentioned he also asked for other agricultural districts. He had previously pointed out that the increase of population—that was taking the rolls as a guide—had been 11 per cent. on the goldfields and 31 per cent. in the agricultural districts. He had previously stated that the applications for land had risen from something like 320 in May, 1902, to something over 950 in July last. That was an evidence of the immense increase which had taken place in settlement, and of the large population that was coming upon the land; and although the increase in actual numbers might not have been so great as on the goldfields and in the metropolitan areas, those places were becoming populous centres, and they were equally entitled to consideration in regard to representation. Reference had been made to the way in which the interests of the goldfields were considered by the old settlers, and by those who dealt with the question of administration in the earlier days of the fields. As one of those who represented the people at that time, and one of those who formed the Ministry then existing, he might say that the object of the Ministry of that day, and of the Parliament too, was to deal fairly in regard to redistribution. Had it not been for the liberality at that time extended to these large centres, and also the broad-minded way in which we considered these matters, it was probable that we should have found many institutions we were now enjoying not within our reach. The people would not have had the advantages they now possessed. As long as it was thought wise to farther liberalise our Constitution we did so. We were not pressed to do it, but did it in fairness to the people. All recognised the great good done to the State by the large amount of settlement which took place, and by the impetus given in connection with our gold-mines.

MR. NANSON: Did the hon. member think he was better than members in the towns and on the goldfields?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Members would recollect that at that time what might be

termed the agricultural representation was really greater than that of the more largely settled localities; but it had not increased in proportion to representation in other parts. Those representing the agricultural interests had maintained a normal position, as it were. Had not matters developed as they did so satisfactorily, and had the gold mines not turned out as they did, the burden would have fallen upon the old settlers in Western Australia, who would have had to carry the whole of the responsibility of this State. We had seen the great advance the country had made, and recognised that it was to our advantage to help these things forward. At the same time we did not show selfishness in the matter; we simply exhibited caution. He took it that was what we were doing to-day, and until we were confident that the affairs of this State could be safely trusted to the majority of the people, we should for some time to come exercise due caution and act as it were *in loco parentis*. We should strengthen our position rather than hand over to the tender mercies of the large majority who had no stake in the country the interests of this great community. In time Western Australia must become a very important country, and in time that which was asked for would be justified, but to-day he did not consider it was so. Although it had frequently been said that we had not acted with that generosity and liberality which we should have done, he took it that our institutions proved that we had acted fairly and justly in every respect.

MR. NANSON: Who found the money?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: We had found the money. Had there not been the bold and adventurous policy which was followed, we should not have been as advanced as we were to-day, and it had been recognised throughout Australia and the world that we had shown confidence in our own country. It was, he thought, admitted by the people themselves that we always dealt fairly; we kept pace with the advance made. He was confident that the suggestions which had been made would never have found ventilation in this House had it not been for the desire on the part of the hon. member and those associated with him to make the statements which had been

made here for the purpose of political popularity.

MR. PURKISS: Whom was the hon. member referring to?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The whole lot.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The "combine."

HON. F. H. PIESSE: One reference was made by the member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) in his speech to-night. Although everything that could be done was done to help forward the advancement of the State, although we took the responsibility and did all we could to see everything forge ahead, we had to learn a great deal with regard to extravagance from people who came here to develop the affairs of this country. There was one little instance Mr. Harper did not note, and that was with regard to the expenditure of public funds here. In connection with their roads boards and other local institutions of this character, those who were intrusted with the expenditure of public funds here—he spoke for the older settlers of this State—were always very cautious. They spent much time and gave some of their own money in helping forward the development of the affairs of this State. He would give an instance that occurred during his own administration in connection with the establishment of a roads board at Coolgardie. A vote was requested for a sum of £600 odd for certain expenditure, which was granted, and when he asked for a return as to how the amount had been expended he found that the whole of it, with the exception of £20, had been paid in salaries. So there was a case where extravagance showed itself, and it was not the people intrusted with the control of affairs who were extravagant, but those who came here and expected money to be lavishly expended on their towns. With regard to the hostile attitude attributed to the agriculturists, there had been none whatever. Agriculturists always recognised that, if it had not been for the development which took place, the agricultural interests would not have advanced as rapidly as they had, and they gave every credit to those who had developed the goldmining industry, and also saw that they gave them fair representation.

MR. PURKISS: Who were they?

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Those who were in the House to put on the brake to prevent hasty legislation, and to assist in helping forward the affairs of the State, by preventing these affairs getting into the hands of others who might not act as prudently as those, who knew more about the State, had in the past. Agricultural and pastoral centres had long enjoyed advantages of representation which they were little by little giving away. The other parts of the State, as they reached sufficient importance and became settled, were given increased representation; but, until they were more settled, the suggestion of the select committee should be adopted. Agriculturists were not asking too much. They only asked for fair representation. Population in agricultural districts was increasing, and increasing so rapidly as to justify the action of the Committee. In these circumstances they were justified in getting what he had asked for.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It seemed almost a remarkable incident that, when the Bill was before the House last session, those gentlemen who were strongest in its condemnation to-day were the strongest advocates for it six months ago. Was it not remarkable also that this Bill (about which there was so much to say by the cave-dwellers, the Adullamites on the cross benches) six months ago went through the second-reading stage and into the Committee stage without a division being called for?

MR. NANSON: It was a different Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knew perfectly well the difference, and how trifling it was. He also knew that it suited him to trot out a taradiddle of that description to cover his misdeeds of six months ago. Members had united on the cross benches in the grand cause of liberty, the grand cause of constitutional Government, and the grand cause of the liberties of the people; but when the division was taken last year on a resolution to make the number of electors in each district as nearly as possible on a population basis, not one of those gentlemen was found voting in favour of it. The division was

recorded in *Hansard*, folio 2356, vol. 22, and read as follows:—

Mr. Hopkins moved that the following words be added to the clause:—Provided always that the number of electors in each Electoral District shall be, as nearly as practicable, determined in the following manner:—  
(1) A quota shall be ascertained by dividing the number of the electors appearing on the Assembly rolls for the State as shown by the latest statistics of the State, by the number of Electoral Districts.

Those who supported that resolution were Messrs. Bath, Hastie, Holman, Hopkins, Reid, and Taylor. The cave-dwellers had brought forth a scheme, and it seemed that the Government, the Opposition, and the cross-benches were agreed on the question of 10 northerly constituencies.

[MR. CONNOR: That was not so.] Kimberley, Pilbarra and Gascoyne contained 2,047 electors, the quota being 600 for each. This all had agreed to. Roebourne was agreed to. Murchison, Cue, and Mt. Magnet had three members for a total of 5,300 electors. That was agreed upon. Geraldton, Greenough and Irwin had three members for 1,261 electors; that was agreed upon also. Fremantle, under the scheme propounded by the gentlemen on the cross-benches, would have a quota of 2,419 for each constituency. The metropolis would have a quota of 2,690; but when it came to the Eastern Goldfields, situated 400 miles from the seat of Government, their proposal was to have one member for 2,923 electors. Perhaps goldfields members on the cross-benches had not viewed the matter carefully from this standpoint. If we had a population basis, the metropolitan area would have to relinquish one member and the goldfields would have one member in addition to the present number. Last session he (the Minister) had directed public attention to the fact that, while in the Electoral Act we conceded the principle of one-man-one-vote, we had never in this State, nor had any other State in Australia, nor had the Commonwealth carried out the principle to its logical conclusion, an equal number of persons in each electorate in the State. When the Opposition or the party on the cross-benches once surrendered the point of population basis, it only became a matter of degree. They, the cross benches, did not come out for a population basis, and when the question was before the House

six months ago, not one of those who had spoken so eloquently about it to-night was man enough to vote for it when they had the opportunity. He (the Minister for Lands) was then an independent member on the cross-benches, and recognised that it was his duty to lay his impressions before the House and cast upon the Government, the Opposition, or the member, as the case may be, in charge of a resolution the obligation of proving to the House what their principles were. In the course of that debate the only member to render him any assistance was the member for Dundas. When the divisions took place the member for Greenough voted once or twice, and the member for the Moore, and he believed the member for Plantagenet. Those who decried the Bill to-day were the foremost champions of it six months ago. The Federal Government had been called upon recently to deal with the principle now concerning this Assembly, to allocate their constituencies on a basis fair and reasonable; those who recalled Sir Edmund Barton when Attorney General of New South Wales advocating as he did the principle of equal representation in constituencies anticipated that, armed with a strong national ally in the shape of the Labour party in the House of Representatives, he would have done something to bring that principle into operation; but aided by that ally away from the glare of the local Press which might tend to influence them in their constituencies, and free from all those terrors, it was astonishing when the question came up for consideration that those gentlemen not only surrendered their position but flouted their self-appointed commissioners in doing it, by retiring and accepting the more conservative principle that there was something more than population to be considered. Those like unto himself whose tendencies were more daring than conservative, had hoped the matter might have been fought out in the national Parliament as an object-lesson to the States. As a matter of fact the Assembly six months ago had placed its certificate upon the Bill before the House to-night, and had permitted the Bill to go through the second reading and leave the Committee stage without a protest against it other than from himself. The Bill, as a matter of fact, bore on its

face the imprint of the Assembly, the certificate of this House, as it went to the Upper House some few months since. Another place had defeated it, and, as a result, it had been reintroduced in the form in which the Assembly had sent it away. One would find it very interesting to read a few remarks which fell from the daring liberals occupying prominent places on the Opposition cross-benches. The member for the Murchison was one of the most interesting members of the Assembly. On page 1870 of last year's *Hansard* we would see what this distinguished parliamentarian had said six months ago. He said:—

I am glad to be able to congratulate the Ministry in no grudging manner in having introduced a Bill which, to my mind, has been conceived in no party spirit, but has been drawn, generally speaking, on broad lines, and discloses in almost every word and sentence the desire to do justice to all parts of the State, a desire to render equal justice to every one of the great interests of the State, and to maintain the balance even between those conflicting interests—conflicting at least in some respects—which go to make up the sum total of every community. I observe that the member for Boulder interjects with a laugh, intended of course to express doubt, when I refer to the Bill as being conceived in a spirit of fairness to every section of the community. I think that perhaps one of the best evidences of that spirit of fairness is the fact that the Bill, taking it as a whole, has aroused no great degree of enthusiasm, nor, except on the goldfields, any great degree of opposition.

The hon. member was interesting because of his acrobatic performances, because he entered this Assembly on the ticket of the liberal party in opposition to the old Forrest Government, sat with the Leake party, crossed the floor on the point of Mr. Leake's toe, and in due course became an adherent of the Opposition. Not two-thirds of the life of the Parliament had expired, still in that brief period he had been an adherent of Leake, an opponent of Leake, an adherent of Piesse, and a Minister for Mr. Morgans. Leader but yesterday of the Opposition, to-day its most violent opponent. Only recently the reincarnation of a dead statesman, the spook of Gladstone; and last but not least, in the excruciatingly funny words of that morning journal which one year advocates free-trade and next year protection, we were told that the hon. member was the capable leader of a great reform party in

this Chamber. The hon. member in denouncing the Bill was carrying on the old game of party politics. When he entered this Assembly he represented a portion of the Victoria district on the narrow lines of parochialism, on the ground that the district had been sacrificed by the Governments of this country. That statement was probably true of every Government save the present; the people of the Victoria district admitted to-day that more good had been done for them by the present Government than by all the others put together; before the next election the people of that district would yearn for representatives to aid the present Government in building up the resources of the country, instead of following the policy of the hon. member and undoing the good now being done. Moreover, the hon. member, on his parochial ticket, denounced the hardships inflicted on the Victoria district by the leader of the old Forrest Government, and yet the hon. member yearned for the opportunity to lick the hand which scourged him. On every possible occasion the most slavish adulation was meted out to Sir John Forrest. The hon. member denounced every proposition which came forward, bursting forth like Vesuvius, weeping tears so copiously that it was said a petition would be presented to the Speaker to have holes bored through the floor to keep the member for Mount Margaret from getting his feet wet. Since this debate started the trail of party politics had been exposed, the trail found in every discussion raised by the member for the Murchison. That member and some other cave-dwellers thought they could induce him (Mr. Hopkins) to denounce the Government, his leader, or this Bill. But it was not customary, even if a difference of opinion did exist in a Cabinet, for Ministers to blab of it to their opponents. Cabinet, in dealing with such questions, met in a judicial manner, disregarding party strife and away from the turmoil of debate, for the purpose of consideration. How could good and stable government be secured if on every difference of opinion members were to retire from the Cabinet? Those taradiddles were good enough for those who advanced them. The member for Perth

(Mr. Purkiss) favoured us with a number of interjections; yet he had not a word to say in condemnation of the Bill when it came before the House six months ago. One could imagine him saying then in the words of Shakespeare, "It is very like a weasel." But now, looking at it through the hysteria of our modern Hamlet, the member for the Murchison, the hon. member says "Methinks it's like a whale, very like a whale." Considering all the trouble and anxiety which the liberal party went through when they brought that dear old gentleman into prominence, one was apt to wonder if the achievement was worth the cost. If the hon. member had only been able to comprehend the meaning of the Bill when it was dealt with last year, I assume he would not have supported it. This was only another illustration of the truth that the world knew nothing of its greatest men. For the information of the House he (Mr. Hopkins) would read some independent extracts. He might have elaborated the question to a greater extent, and had ample opportunities for so doing because of the extravagant propositions of the cross-benches. None could well accuse the *Daily News* of being a Government paper. A few days ago it published this in a leader:—

Certainly the corner party are beating the political drum very loudly, and have done a great deal of shouting over their redistribution of seats creation; but when all is said and done, their scheme is so close to that of the Government that there is hardly any difference between them. In essence, they are almost identical schemes; so that the corner party's magnificent conception of an allotment of seats upon a population basis, or nearly so, becomes on examination the highest possible tribute to the democratic nature of the Bill introduced by the Government.

Last session the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) said he could not conceive the possibility of a Redistribution of Seats Bill on a population basis; and when the hon. member surrendered his advocacy of an absolute population basis, the extent to which interests should be given representation was a question of degree only; and surely the Government, aided by expert officers, were more capable of framing a Bill which would meet the requirements of the country than were the members sitting in a dissatisfied position on the cross-benches.

MR. DAGLISH challenged the Minister to prove that he (Mr. Daglish) adopted last session the same quota as was now proposed.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS said he could quote *Hansard* to show that the hon. member repudiated the population basis; and when a division was taken on that question, the hon. member, as usual, did not vote. That established the sincerity of another cave-dweller. The *Daily News* leader continued:—

It must, however, be remembered that the constituency of Forrest is a Labour constituency, specially carved out to give representation to the workers at the big timber mills in the South-West. There can be no possibility of doubt that Forrest will return a Labour member who will sit with the other Labour members in the House, who are, with one exception, all goldfields members. Essentially, therefore, the Forrest constituency may be added to the goldfields party, thus making the Government and corner party in accord upon that question. Both parties agree that Pilbarra is a mining district; and that leaves in the scheme three members for the North-West, another point in which the two proposals coalesce.

Another extract:—

In the last analysis, therefore, the great political invention and *magnum opus* of this party, which poses as the watch-dogs of democracy, resolves itself into a question whether the town or the country is to have three disputed seats. It is a marvellously small amount of wool for so much cry.

That was not the statement of a Ministerial supporter, but of an independent onlooker; and he hoped the cave-dwellers would take it to heart and thoroughly appreciate the sentiment. The article went on:—

Not all the agitation which the corner party may engineer or devise can induce the public to manifest any interest or concern upon such a trivial matter. If anything, the public will be rather inclined to support the proposal to give the agricultural districts greater representation, so as to discourage the policy of centralisation, against which all true democrats inveigh. The weak spot in the corner party's manifesto is that whilst advocating representation on a population basis as their guiding principle, they do not adhere to their principle. In asking the House to accept a proposal which is a derogation from their principle, they destroy the strength of their position, and make the struggle between themselves and the Government one purely of the degree in which the general principle shall be departed from. Then, when it appears that there is no great principle at stake, and that

the cleavage between the Government and the corner party is only a matter of three seats, more or less, to the agricultural districts or the metropolitan area, it becomes apparent that the corner party has been very hard put to it to find fault with the Bill as drafted by the Government.

That was one independent testimony.

MR. DIAMOND: Who was the awful person who wrote that?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member had been listening he must have known that I was quoting from the *Daily News*, which I think I am safe in doing as that newspaper has no representative in either House. I have quoted the *Morning Herald* and the *Daily News*.

MEMBER: Not the *Herald*.

#### EXPLANATIONS—AN INTERLUDE.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have quoted the *Herald* which in one of its excruciatingly funny paragraphs has announced that the member for the Murchison is the leader of a great reform party.

THE PREMIER: I wonder who wrote that article.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think it is fair that the Premier should propound such a question.

MR. NANSON: The hon. member did not quote the article. I ask him to quote it; I challenge the hon. member to quote the article, as he is not allowed to tell such falsehoods to the House. The hon. member has adopted his characteristic of deliberate misrepresentation.

THE PREMIER: Don't read such rubbish from that rag.

MR. NANSON: I challenge the hon. member to quote that article, or I brand him as a coward and a liar.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I did quote from the *Morning Herald*.

MR. NANSON: Is the hon. member entitled to make charges of this kind against me and not quote the article.

THE PREMIER: Of course he is.

MR. NANSON: The hon. member cannot quote it; the hon. member is asserting what he knows to be untrue.

THE PREMIER: That is unparliamentary.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Entirely unparliamentary.

MR. NANSON: If the hon. member does not quote it, I brand him as what he is, unless he will do it.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member should behave himself, although he comes from the Murchison and runs a daily newspaper.

MR. MORAN: I will tell Pigott if you don't be quiet.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I can hardly understand a gentleman of such pugilistic dimensions as the member for the Murchison striking a fighting attitude and calling people such horrible names—names which he should never use in polite society.

MR. NANSON: Names which will stick unless the hon. member will answer the challenge. Am I not entitled, Mr. Chairman, to ask for a withdrawal when the hon. member has made charges against me which he refuses to substantiate?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

MR. NANSON: The hon. member has accused me of having stated in a newspaper that I was a leader of a great reform party. I have challenged the Minister to produce that extract and read it, and he has not done so, although I have done my best to aggravate the Minister into doing so by using language to him which no man who has any sense of honour would submit to. I am willing to use that language outside the Chamber until the hon. member produces the extract which he says he was able to produce.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I desire to contradict the statement of the hon. member. I did not say the hon. member had written the article. The Premier interjected something which may have led the hon. member to assume that I did, but I certainly did not say so, and if the hon. member thinks I did, I willingly withdraw it. I did not make that statement, and members will bear me out that I did not do so. No doubt the hon. member was smarting under the criticism which I was giving and of which the hon. member has been such a pastmaster. The hon. member has continuously thrown innuendos towards me during the debate. He evidently thought that I would listen to them for ever, and that he could go on without fear of my retaliating. I do not happen to be built that way. Now that the hon. member has the position put straight, perhaps he has sufficient gentle-

manly instinct in him to withdraw the remarks which he has made.

MR. NANSON: I withdraw nothing. I will reply later on.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Nothing more could be expected from the hon. member who could use such language, more particularly in the presence of ladies.

MR. JACOBY: We are in the Assembly. Does the hon. member wish to call attention to strangers?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; I did not call attention to strangers.

#### SPEECH RESUMED.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Now he had a few other extracts equally interesting to the member who represented the Murchison, who had in the past taken such a fiendish delight in throwing out scathing innuendos more particularly directed to himself, no doubt because he (the Minister) did not prove to be as pliable as many of the tools he had to handle during the little manœuvring which had been going on over this question on the cross-benches. This was what the *West Australian* stated, another independent authority:—

It is impossible to contend that the scheme brought forward by the cross-benches in any degree affirms the principle of absolute population representation. Mr. Moran, Mr. Illingworth, and the party which is supporting them in the attack upon the Government schedule are no more desirous of seeing an absolute population representation than are the Government or any other section of the House. So far as the two schemes go, the difference between them closely approximates to that between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, if the population element may be considered. But the Government's Tweedledum has some other consideration to support it beyond the single principle to which the cross-benches appeal, that of what they call the basic principle of popular representation, a principle as much neglected in their scheme as in anybody else's. So slight is the difference between the two measures, as far as this point is concerned, that it is impossible to imagine that the assault on the Ministerial schedule proceeds from any very strong belief in the principles advocated, and is not rather intended as a party demonstration.

That was what he had asserted all through this trial of party politics which had been introduced into the party debate. His opinion of party government was that whilst the Government were in power and whilst they submitted a

policy to the country which found acceptance in the country, and members on the other side were not capable of putting them on one side and advancing something better, then there was an obligation on members to help the Government to carry their policy and not to throw obstacles in the way. A feeling would soon be dawning on the constituents of the country that this policy of wrecking, wrecking, wrecking would have to give way, and that individual members would be compelled to advance some reasonable propositions to aid in building up the resources of the country, instead of endeavouring to destroy the propositions the Government were introducing. The article continued:—

A proposal which would give, as would that of the cross-benches, a member for every 700 votes in one part of the State and which in another part of the State allows, say, 2,000 votes per member, can hardly be considered a concession to the basic principle of popular representation. The attack from the cross-benches was on the agricultural interest—an interest which of all others it is of importance to the State at this juncture to develop. The towns can take care of themselves, so can the mining interest: but unless the agricultural section of the community be given an adequate representation (and no representation would be adequate which would be strictly proportionate to their present numbers), this great industry which Western Australia, in all probability, will have to look to in the future as the main lasting foundation of her strength, may, where it cannot make its wants felt, suffer grievously at the hands of the majorities of the more populous areas.

The member for South Fremantle continuously interjected with that characteristic laugh, the empty laugh that speaks the vacant mind. The article went on to say:—

The concession of four members by the cross-benches to the pastoral interest upsets their whole scheme and ruins their argument. Of course, it is understood that the object of giving four members to the tiny population in the pastoral part of the State was to capture the direct Opposition vote, which largely consists of representatives from the far North. But these gentlemen have sufficient acumen to know that once so preponderating a vote was cast into the hands of the populous centres the existence of this representation would be short-lived indeed, and the more obviously so if the new schedule were adopted on the single ground urged in its favour by the cross-bench speakers, that it carries out the basic principle of popular representation. Admit that argument for adopting the cross-bench scheme, and its logical application will get rid

of any representation for the North whatever in a very few years.

MR. DIAMOND: Was it in order to read a leading article from a newspaper? All members had read the article this morning.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could quote from a newspaper.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: For the hon. member's special benefit he would read another paragraph, then he thought he had finished. The article said:—

All the absurd accusations and counter-accusations of change of views have really nothing to do with the matter. The question is not whether we are to go by theories or by general principles, which carried to their conclusion would sacrifice the true interests of the State and threaten its development, and, in time, prove actually fatal to themselves, but to provide such a constitution as will give not merely, from the point of numbers, a purely proportionate position to the more important occupations, but such a representation as will make their voice something more than a mockery. It is already recognised that majorities can very well look after themselves. It is the minorities, which often shelter the most valuable part of a country's interests, which have to be given a sufficient voice. The time will come, in all probability, when mere numbers will prevail, and in this event we may look for the reign of the metropolitan district, and with what results to the State from such a monopoly may be readily conceived.

These were independent testimonies, which he felt some members of the House who had not time to read them might have been interested to hear; but what passed his comprehension was that when the cross-bench party got to work and mustered their proposals, they expected members of the Eastern Goldfields constituencies, who were 400 miles from the seat of Government, to have one member to 2,923 electors, whilst Fremantle had one member for every 2,119. The metropolitan districts were to have a member to every 2,690 electors, the Southern country districts one member for every 2,120, whereas if a population basis pure and simple had been accepted, then the Eastern Goldfields would have had another member and Fremantle one member less. This accounted no doubt for the wonderful unanimity which we saw exhibited between two or three members of the House, and more par-

ticularly manifested in this matter by the member for South Fremantle. There was one point on which he wished to make himself perfectly clear. Perhaps he had spoken pretty strongly, and if he had he left it to the members of the Committee to say whether it was reasonable for a member of the Government, or even an independent member of the House, to sit still and take the gibes and scathing innuendos which some of his friends had got into the habit of throwing across the Chamber, it might be because he had been so good-natured to take no notice of them. He thought they had pretty well squared accounts now. There were a few extracts from *Hansard* which he had purposed reading; however he had made the position perfectly clear in regard to those persons who had had an opportunity of having a population franchise but would not take it, and who to-day were calling for it: we had indications of their sincerity. He hoped that if he had wearied the Committee, they would excuse him. He had not the slightest intention of speaking at such length, but he thought there was an obligation cast upon him to justify the position he held, and he took this opportunity of saying that if he hit hard it was because he felt hard, and if the blows had found a resting place, it was probably because there was plenty of room for them to hit. He might quote the words which appeared, he believed, in the "Woman in White," and say the member for the Murchison was usually buoyed up by an impenetrable calm, but he regretted to say that on this occasion that calm was ruffled to an unseemly extent. At the same time it was just as well now for the hon. member to recognise that there was some obligation from one member to another, and that what one sent across he was very apt to get back with interest added.

MR. NANSON: Not in the slightest degree did he object to the hon. gentleman speaking strongly, but what he did object to was the hon. member speaking untruthfully. Even in politics there was a degree of honour, and a degree of honour was expected from politicians. To-night the hon. gentleman deliberately stated that in a newspaper which he (Mr. Nanson) controlled, certain statements were made.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** It was never said by him that the hon. member controlled it.

**MR. NANSON:** That paper was controlled and owned by him, and he was responsible for what appeared in the leading columns of that paper. The hon. gentleman gave his own version of what appeared in that paper, and when he challenged the hon. member to produce the extract, the hon. gentleman was unable to do so. Why? Because that extract existed only in his own imagination.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** said he would produce it next night.

**THE PREMIER:** Let him alone.

**MR. NANSON:** One did not envy the tactics of the hon. gentleman. He (Mr. Nanson) spoke strongly in the course of his speech, not because he felt strongly, but because his feelings towards a person who misrepresented truth were feelings of a different kind; they were feelings of contempt and pity for the cause that should have to employ such unworthy weapons and such an unworthy person as the member for Boulder had proved himself to be. The member for Boulder could come into this House with long extracts from newspapers favourable to his cause, and it was equally open to him to have come into the House to-night with a genuine extract instead of a vamped-up, invented extract, which he asked members to believe was taken from the *Morning Herald*.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** It was assumed that members read the paper.

**MR. NANSON:** If the hon. member assumed that they read the paper, it only said the more for the hardihood, the callousness of himself towards his own character. One did not mind at all what the hon. gentleman said about him, but one would have thought that the hon. gentleman would have had some self-respect; one would have thought that in this House he would like to be regarded as a man of honour and a man of truth; but it seemed he was indifferent on that score.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** If the hon. member was the standard, yes he was.

**MR. NANSON:** That hon. gentleman did not care twopence; he did not care anything at all whether he was regarded

as a man of truth or a man of honour so long as he could score a point for a few moments against an opponent, and if he could score that point by descending to the level of falsehoods and wilful misrepresentation and wilful chicanery, did he hesitate? No. Any weapon, no matter how black, how dishonourable, was sufficiently good to attempt to kill an opponent with. We had been taunted in this Chamber, we had been taunted by the Premier, who could laugh when aspersions of this kind were brought against one of his own colleagues—he wondered where the Premier's own sense in this matter was.

**THE PREMIER:** Those aspersions were treated with contempt by him. He had complete confidence in his colleague.

**MR. NANSON:** Now one was glad; now one was pleased at getting the hon. gentleman into a little more reasonable frame of mind. He (Mr. Nanson) did not regard this matter as one to be laughed at, but as a serious matter, when a member of the Government thought falsehood was a fair weapon. Members had been twitted on these cross-benches with being cave-dwellers, belonging to the Cave of Adullam, he supposed. He gloried in the title. In order to get away from that side of the House where tactics like those employed by the member for Boulder could be employed, and those other tactics that were approved by the Government—and they had been approved by the Premier—it was a very good thing to have a Cave of Adullam to which those who were discontented could go. Let members who looked on the term “cave-dwellers” as a term of discredit look back into sacred writ from which the illustration was taken, and they would see that the men who went to the Cave of Adullam were the chosen of the nation, the patriots of the nation, who went there against the Philistines, and it was not very long before those cave-dwellers were victorious over the Philistines. No doubt when the country recognised the principles they were fighting for, it would be seen that instead of “cave-dweller” being a term of reproach it was a term expressing in the highest degree political virtue, fidelity to conviction, fidelity to what we believed to be true.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** Let the hon. member give us the benediction now.

**MR. NANSON:** The member for Boulder in his speech dealt largely, not with the defence of the second schedule of the Bill, but with abuse of the other side; and if the debate from this moment, since his speech, took a bitterer tone, the hon. gentleman alone was to blame. The hon. gentleman had referred to his (Mr. Nanson's) acrobatic performances in this House.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** The hon. member's somersaults.

**MR. NANSON:** And undoubtedly any member who was honest in this House, who was true to the political convictions he held, must appear to act in an acrobatic way when the Government was itself acting in that manner. When he (Mr. Nanson) went over from the Government side of the House to the Opposition side of the House, he only found out a little earlier than most members in this Chamber what the liberal professions of the Government were worth. He knew in the first session of this Parliament what the democratic sentiments of members forming the Government were worth. He very soon found it out. It was part of his business perhaps, as a journalist, to weigh and examine carefully the words and actions of public men, and he knew very well that sooner or later their liberalism would be exposed as the sham, delusion, and snare it was. Again, he had been twitted because for a time in this House he led the Opposition. There had never been the slightest doubt, either in the House or the country, as to the terms on which he led the Opposition last session, because it was stated clearly, when he delivered his speech as leader of the Opposition in the Queen's Hall, that if he did not find himself in accord with the party he was then leading, if he found his views were not in harmony with their own, then he would take the opportunity of resigning the position he held and going back to his old position as a private and unofficial member. Members of the House knew that whatever might be his faults, whatever might be his errors of judgment, whatever intemperance of language he might at times have been betrayed into, as soon as he found it was absolutely hopeless for the direct Opposition and

himself to come together on what he considered to be the basic principles of liberalism, on what were to him political principles he held most strongly and most dearly, and which no consideration, not even the offer of a portfolio, would induce him to surrender, as the member for Boulder was induced to surrender his—

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** That was repudiated by him.

**MR. NANSON:** That explained the hon. gentleman's fierce indignation and the falsehoods in which he indulged tonight. His conscience was whipping him, was scourging him. He was feeling the whip, not of his (Mr. Nanson's) words, but of his own conscience. That explained the fierce indignation and the falsity in which he had indulged. His conscience was whipping him. He knew that again and again, during the course of the debate on this Bill, he had been challenged to justify his position, and to show why last session he had come before the Chamber and told us that the Bill was a thing of shreds and patches or a rag of a Bill, as he termed it, and why this session, having in the meantime accepted a portfolio with all the emoluments of office, he had gone back on his old principles. One did not desire to be uncharitable. Nor was one actuated by the belief that the member for Boulder would sink all his principles to get on the Treasury bench. The hon. member was writhing under the challenge to justify his position. Instead of doing so he came into the House and read extracts from newspapers, extracts from his (Mr. Nanson's) speeches, all attempts to cover his own retreat, his own apostasy, his own infamy—simply abuse of the other side. The hon. member had better remain quiet. A few days since another member of the Government had come under the lash of the member for Mt. Margaret. One had listened to no severer castigation. So two members of the Government were regarded as being recreant to their political principles. The Premier was also branded in the eyes of the country as having gone back on those principles which he had held from the beginning of his political career, and which he had enunciated in association with him (Mr. Nanson) long years ago. The Premier having

gone back on those principles, now urged the Chamber not to agree to popular government or government by the majority, but to perpetuate and assent to the principle of government by a small number of people instead of the larger number. Years ago, when the Premier was urging the claims of responsible government, one remembered well his eloquent speeches in which again and again he urged that the people should have the right to manage their own affairs. Did he mean that a small handful of them were to govern the majority, as the member for the Williams suggested? That hon. member suggested that a handful of people in the agricultural constituencies were to act in the place of a parent to the great bulk of the people. Who gave those people in the country, that small handful of people in the agricultural constituencies, the right to say what was good for the vast majority of the people? Surely it was the people themselves who had the right to know what was best for themselves. He (Mr. Nanson) did not care even if the people were not wise. If the people declared that they would send the country hurling down to ruin, the majority of the people had a right to do it. The very basis of democratic government was government of the people, by the people, and for the people. [The MINISTER FOR LANDS: More hysteria!] The member for Boulder now commented on the statement of one of the greatest democratic statesmen of the world—Abraham Lincoln—as being mere “hysteria.” That showed how much democratic sentiment was owned by the hon. member, who had left those with whom he was formerly allied, and gone over to the conservatives and reactionaries, and who was a lost soul, so far as the democratic movement was concerned. When the words of Abraham Lincoln had been uttered, the only comment of the hon. member had been “hysteria.” One wondered if he was prepared to go before his own electors and tell them that government of the people, for the people, and by the people, was mere hysteria, and merely a form of words with which the mass of the people had been deluded. It might be the politics of the hon. member. It was no doubt by using language of that kind outside the House that he had lifted himself into power. He should

remember that the same power, the same people who placed him in power, could remove that power from him, and that when he endeavoured to undermine the ladder by which he climbed, it was not only the ladder but himself that fell. One welcomed the suggestion, coming from the quarter it did, that the words of the greatest statesman of the American Union, were merely hysteria and that they did not express a political truth, but were merely a sort of political platform rubbish, in which the hon. member himself used to indulge when he was seeking votes, and not speaking in the House.

THE MINISTER for Lands denied having applied the word to the particular remark of the hon. member.

MR. NANSON: Unfortunately for the hon. member there were too many witnesses around him. It was useless to contradict the statement. One might for a few moments endeavour to analyse the argument of the member for Boulder in the remarkable speech he had delivered this evening, and one used the word “argument” for want of a better word. There was very little argument in the speech, but he (Mr. Nanson) would endeavour to find out exactly what was running in the mind of the hon. member, and what was the argument which he would like to have presented to the House. Clearly his defence, if it could be called a defence, amounted to this. Since last year he could not get the House to agree to representation on a popular basis, he would this year endeavour to assist the Government in giving representation on a basis diametrically opposed to it. Surely that was a most extraordinary boast for any politician to put forward. If he (Mr. Nanson) followed the example, which he should be sorry to do, he would be justified in turning his back on anything he had said with regard to the abolition of the other House because he had not been able to carry the point in the House. It might suit the hon. member to take up and drop principles so carelessly, but to him (Mr. Nanson) a principle was sacred, and having given adhesion to a single Chamber constitution he should never go back on it unless he had ample reason to justify his doing so. He should never dream of telling the House or any sensible man

that he was justified in going back on his principles simply because he could not get the House to agree with him. Yet that was the hon. member's excuse for supporting the Bill. Last session he tried to get representation on a population basis, and because he could not get it, thought himself justified in taking a portfolio and supporting principles which formerly he bitterly opposed. One interjection by the member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) clearly showed the governing motive behind the Bill. The hon. member said it was safer to give votes to acres than to persons. The hon. member now interjected that this was a joke, and his explanation must be accepted; but whatever he might say, it was unquestionable that in the second schedule acres were regarded as of more virtue than men and women. Much was heard of the mining, agricultural, and timber resources of the country; but surely our great wealth was not our mines, agriculture, or timber, but the men and women who were making this country what it is; and what the cross-benches were pleading for—misrepresented though they were by a section of the Press which would surrender anything to expediency—was the sacred rights of the people. They regarded the people as the real wealth of the country, the wealth which should be represented, and not the dead wealth of gold, timber, and agricultural produce. Democracy might lose faith in him (Mr. Nanson), but he would believe till his dying hour that whatever the mistakes of the people as a whole might be, they counted as nothing compared with the mistakes of an oligarchy such as it was now attempted to fasten on this country. If a democracy made mistakes it suffered for them; and there could be no hope of future progress except by trusting the people. It was not by going backward to despotism, but by going forward and giving more power to the people as a whole that progress could be made. Members might laugh and call such theories heroics; but everyone who had studied the science of government knew our whole civilization was advancing in that direction, and that the outlook would be dark indeed if we went back to the time when one man or a few men could impose their will on the majority. The member for Beverley (Mr. Harper)

devoted himself in his speech to the argument that large cities must be kept in subjection; that the majority must always be the slaves of the minority. The hon. member's reasons for that astounding view were interesting. The hon. member said the towns were more intelligent than the country. Therefore, because more intelligent, the towns were to be deprived of their fair share of representation. The libel against the country districts was the hon. member's libel. He (Mr. Nanson) did not believe the towns to be more intelligent; but if they were, did anyone ever hear a more extraordinary argument than that people were not to be given full political power because of their intelligence? For what was a vote to be given; for intelligence or for stupidity? A more amazing doctrine was never heard. It suggested that instead of coming from a Legislative Assembly it came from a lunatic asylum. If it were true, the converse was true that we should give votes to the "stupid party," as the party of reaction had been called, and rightly called if many of their speeches resembled that of the member for Beverley, whom we all respected highly, but who yet showed himself on this subject to be absolutely out of touch with ordinary common sense. He laid down the premise that large aggregates of electors always made strong attacks on the public purse. Were we to suppose that the larger the body the stronger in proportion to population would be the attack? Last year a Ministerial party went up to Gingin—a small town; and a member of the Government had informed him (Mr. Nanson) that Ministers were then requested to provide everyone in the town with rainwater tanks. The story was probably exaggerated; but it contradicted the argument of the hon. member that the larger the community the greater its demands on the public purse. The Estimates showed that the smaller the population the larger the demands. But where did the money come from which filled the public purse? One would imagine in listening to the hon. member that revenue fell "like the gentle dew from heaven," and did not come out of the pockets of the people: that the money which the large centres were accused of endeavouring to obtain came not out of the people's pockets but

from an extraneous source. The great proportion of the revenue actually came from the people who had the astounding effrontery to demand that the money taken from their pockets should be devoted to their benefit. That was the extraordinary position of the members for Beverley, Williams, and York. With reference to the consumer in the large towns, what were the actual facts regarding this expenditure? In Perth a comparatively small sum had been spent; and when money had been squandered in Perth without sufficient reason, who was responsible for that expenditure? Those members, like the member for York and the member for the Williams, those obedient country members who supported any Government in power, who drifted into an unresisting support of the Government, and who did not believe in party politics, whose recollections went back to the old days of Western Australia when the Government was the Czar of the country, they voted for the continuance of this extravagance. What was the greatest piece of extravagance in regard to public buildings which we had had since responsible government was inaugurated? Every member admitted it was the building of the ballroom at Government House. By the aid of what members was that vote carried? Look up the division list at the time; he did not say he was certain it was carried by country members, yet he would be greatly surprised if one did not find a large sprinkling of country members in that division list, those members who told us where there were large centres of population, people were greedy to get their hands into the Treasury chest. He did not suppose one could find any person in Perth who would say that the expenditure on the ballroom was justified. In the populous electorates there was greater concern for purity of government and economy of expenditure. When he championed the cause of State-elected Governors and the reduction of the salary of the Governor to a reasonable amount, to such a figure as that paid in Canada, did he get the support of country members? No. Did he get the support of those members who it was said always wished to get their hands into the Treasury chest? He got the support from the Labour

party and the advanced democratic party in the House who were thoroughly in sympathy with any great democratic movement, although there was a serious difference of opinion between the Labour party and himself in regard to some industrial legislation the Government brought forward. We had been given a large array of figures to-night, and he did not think the figures had helped to enlighten the question a great deal, but after all what was the position we had to return to? We had a Government scheme, or a Government-cum-direct-*Opposition* scheme which gave 15 seats for 43,000 electors on the goldfields—he did not care whether they were called goldfields, he was going on a population basis—it gave 13 seats to 43,000 electors in the metropolis, and 18 seats for 27,000 electors in country districts and in coastal towns. Could anyone who believed in the slightest degree in popular government, who believed the majority should rule, say there was any fairness and justice in saying that 27,000 people in the State should return 18 members, and that two groups of 43,000 electors should return—one 15 members, and one 13 members? He only regretted, when he saw the reception which the cross-bench scheme had received, that members did not go farther; but the scheme of the cross-bench members was brought forward in a spirit of moderation.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: How did you divide those members?

MR. NANSON said he made up the 18 with all the members regarded as agricultural or what the member regarded as coastal members. He divided the representation of the country generally into three groups. The first group comprised those with large centres of population; the second, those with moderately large populations; and the third, the small centres of population, and roughly speaking it made a good division. Members on the Treasury benches might juggle and quibble as they pleased, but there was no getting away from the fact that under the scheme 15 seats were given to 43,000 goldfields electors, and 13 seats to 43,000 metropolitan electors, and 18 seats to 27,000 electors. Members might argue and prevaricate as they liked; it was impossible to dispute the accuracy of these figures, hence it was we saw their

organs in the Press and they themselves chary of giving the cross-bench scheme a chance of sinking into the public mind. He only regretted in the scheme put forward by the cross-benches that we did not see the hopeless task we had conferred on ourselves, and gave greater vent to principle instead of compromising. He regretted we did not demand a larger share of representation for population. We did not go out with the idea of securing a party trial; we wanted to get better representation for the country. The members on the cross-benches had united on the principle to get as liberal representation to the State as a whole as it was possible to give. In considering the scheme we thought if we were moderate there would be a fair possibility of that scheme being passed. We recognised that now when we had one member belonging to the direct Opposition saying he would not give votes to intelligence but to stupidity, and when one member said he would not give votes to people but to acres we recognised the utility of the struggle. We recognised also that those members were backed up by newspapers that very seldom dared give a straight-out opinion, but who liked to pose as exponents of democratic opinions. When we found these forces arrayed against us we must submit to the inevitable, but we were determined to make a good fight and show as far as in our power at least that we were true to democratic principles and did not despair of ultimate triumph. The other night he had been twitted with using language which it was said very closely resembled the language used, so he was told, by the great English statesman, Gladstone. He might very well use that language again, because no language could be more appropriate. The standard we had raised was at the present moment drooping; he had no doubt that standard would ultimately go on to victory, and he was sure that victory was not so far distant as some members thought. He might be accused of plagiarism as had been suggested in using language of that kind. It mattered not to him what the member for Boulder or other members said, for he was not the first person who had been accused of plagiarism because of language being used approaching closely to language which had been used

previously by other persons. The great leader of the conservative cause, Lord Beaconsfield, had the same charge laid against him on a great occasion, and a similar charge was made against the late poet laureate, Lord Tennyson. It was a small matter whether he had plagiarised or not. It was absolutely true and certain these words were used on a great occasion by Mr. Gladstone, and they applied equally to this country. We had at the present time it seemed a wave of conservatism, or call it a wave of political apathy, submerging the country; and therefore possibly the people did not take that interest in public matters which they otherwise would. When the time came—and he devoutly hoped it would be a long time coming—when the prosperity was not so great as to-day, we should see the people awakening to the fact that it was not safe to leave the destiny of this country in the hands of those who believed it was unsafe to give a vote to intelligence and only safe to give a vote to stupidity. No country was ever yet made by stupidity. Many a country had been destroyed by these forces. Many a country had been destroyed by regarding acres as of more importance than manhood, and sooner or later the people of this country would recognise that it was necessary to put the country again on the track from which it had strayed; that it was necessary to declare in the most emphatic manner possible our adherence to those basic democratic truths which lay at the root of all successful government in a self-governing country. He did not doubt that it would come, and whether it came soon or late their vindication was equally assured. He did not expect vindication in this Chamber so far as the majority were concerned, but the minority were strong in the consciousness that this cause, the cause they were advocating, was a true cause, a righteous cause, a reasonable cause, an intelligent cause. And strong in that knowledge they did not care even if they in some cases impaired their own political careers; in time they would be vindicated, and their vindication would consist in seeing the country more prosperous, more governed in accordance with popular ideas. No matter what might happen to them individually, no matter though

they might have fallen in the struggle, at least they would know they had done something to advance the cause to victory, at least they would know that if they had fallen they had contributed to the final triumph.

MR. CONNOR moved that progress be reported.

Motion (progress) put, and a division taken with the following result :—

|                  |     |     |    |
|------------------|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes             | ... | ... | 13 |
| Noes             | ... | ... | 27 |
| Majority against |     |     | 14 |

| AYES.                | NOES.                |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Mr. Bath             | Mr. Atkins           |
| Mr. Daglish          | Mr. Burges           |
| Mr. Diamond          | Mr. Butcher          |
| Mr. Holman           | Mr. Ewing            |
| Mr. Johnson          | Mr. Ferguson         |
| Mr. Moran            | Mr. Foulkes          |
| Mr. Nanson           | Mr. Gardiner         |
| Mr. Oats             | Mr. Gordon           |
| Mr. Purkiss          | Mr. Gregory          |
| Mr. Stone            | Mr. Harper           |
| Mr. Taylor           | Mr. Hassell          |
| Mr. Wallace          | Mr. Hastie           |
| Mr. Connor (Teller). | Mr. Hayward          |
|                      | Mr. Higham           |
|                      | Mr. Hopkins          |
|                      | Mr. James            |
|                      | Mr. O'Connor         |
|                      | Mr. Phillips         |
|                      | Mr. Plesse           |
|                      | Mr. Pigott           |
|                      | Mr. Quinlan          |
|                      | Mr. Rason            |
|                      | Mr. Reid             |
|                      | Mr. Smith            |
|                      | Mr. Thomas           |
|                      | Mr. Yelverton        |
|                      | Mr. Jacoby (Teller). |

Motion thus negatived.

MR. DAGLISH expressed regret that the Minister for Lands should have chosen to deliver the speech he did this evening.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Naturally the hon. member would.

MR. DAGLISH: It would not add to the reputation of the Chamber, and it would not add to the reputation of the Ministry which indorsed it. He was not expressing this regret in any personal sense, as the Minister for Lands would imply. On every occasion during the three sessions he had been in Parliament when a discreditable speech had been made on either side of the House he had expressed his objection to it, and he always would object to the introduction into the Assembly of the style of a taproom orator or of a bully. He was sorry the Minister for Lands chose to misrepresent the facts which had led up to the present division of opinion in this

Chamber. The Minister for Lands deliberately accused him for one of having changed his opinion.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Those words were not made use of by him.

MR. DAGLISH: That was implied, although the Minister did not choose to put it in those words.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Would the hon. member read this extract of his own speech?

MR. DAGLISH: The hon. gentleman said that he (Mr. Daglish) had repudiated the principle of representation on a population basis. He quite agreed with him that he had done so. He quite agreed with him that he did it not only last session but this session, and in supporting the present proposal to give four members to the Northern part of this State he was repudiating the principle of representation on a strictly population basis, because he knew that it would be unfair and injudicious to apply that principle or attempt to apply it to the Northern area. Last year he had advocated practically what the Committee had been asked to adopt by the member for Cue, the only difference being that there was a slight variation in the quota, owing to the fact that the Government proposals were for 47 members, whereas the present proposal provided for 50 members as a basis of redistribution. He could quote *Hansard* to show that the system of redistribution he had suggested was the same as the scheme suggested by the member for Cue. [Extract read.] His attitude was exactly the same now with regard to the "Forrest" electorate, and exactly the same with regard to general elements as it was last session.

MR. MORAN called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and quorum formed.

MR. DAGLISH: The absence of a quorum showed the attitude taken up by the Government towards him. He objected to this attitude. He had simply been justifying himself against an accusation by the Minister for Lands. It was to be regretted that the Minister for Lands and several members of the Government should choose to adopt the practice of making false charges, and of not sitting in the House while they were being disproved. He claimed the right to give a

reply to the accusation, and from every fair-minded body of men the right to be heard. Last year he had pointed out that—

Taking 47 members as the standard—we have to adopt the census figures, and I regret the Government have not brought forward any later figures than those—we have 107,000 electors, or one member for 2,276 electors. Nineteen of these members represent what may be called dense electorates, thickly-populated electorates, and 28 of them sparsely-populated electorates. I would suggest that some principle like this should be adopted, that the thickly-populated electorates should have one member approximately for 3,000 electors; that would give 19 members representing 3,000 electors each, which would dispose of 57,000 of our electors. Then we have left about 50,000 for the remaining 28 members. Kimberley, Pilbarra, Gascoyne, and Roebourne at present have four members under the proposed Bill for 2,751 electors, or one for every 687. I think that even after allowing for the large area covered by those electorates, this allowance is a little too great, and we might reduce their representation from four to three.

[12 o'clock, midnight.]

MR. MORAN moved—

That the Chairman do now leave the Chair.

Motion put, and before division taken,

MR. MORAN claimed that only one voice having called for a division, he was entitled to withdraw his call.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any one member could secure a division, so long as there were two members in favour of it.

MR. MORAN: But must there not be two voices?

THE CHAIRMAN: Two had been heard by him.

MR. JACOBY: Was the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Diamond) in order in voting when he had paired?

THE CHAIRMAN: The House knew nothing of pairs.

MR. DIAMOND, in explanation, had paired with another member on the main question, but not on motions for adjournment or reporting progress.

MR. JACOBY: The carrying of this motion would defeat the Bill; so this was really the main question.

Division resulted as follows:—

|                  |     |     |     |    |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes             | ... | ... | ... | 8  |
| Noes             | ... | ... | ... | 31 |
|                  |     |     |     | —  |
| Majority against | ... |     |     | 23 |

AYES.  
Mr. Diamond  
Mr. Holman  
Mr. Moran  
Mr. Nanson  
Mr. Oats  
Mr. Purkiss  
Mr. Taylor  
Mr. Connor (Teller).

NOES.  
Mr. Atkins  
Mr. Bath  
Mr. Burges  
Mr. Butcher  
Mr. Daglish  
Mr. Ewing  
Mr. Ferguson  
Mr. Foulkes  
Mr. Gardiner  
Mr. Gordon  
Mr. Gregory  
Mr. Harper  
Mr. Hastie  
Mr. Hayward  
Mr. Higham  
Mr. Hopkins  
Mr. Jacoby  
Mr. James  
Mr. O'Connor  
Mr. Phillips  
Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Pigott  
Mr. Quinlan  
Mr. Rason  
Mr. Reid  
Mr. Smith  
Mr. Stone  
Mr. Thomas  
Mr. Wallace  
Mr. Yelverton  
Mr. Hassell (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

MR. DAGLISH: Having been accused of changing his attitude on this question of redistribution, he must defend himself; especially as the Minister for Lands was challenged to prove his charge, but resolutely declined. Last session he (Mr. Daglish) concluded his remarks on the Constitution Bill by saying:—

I have gone through the Bill, and have taken these electorates, independent of agriculture or mining, and also independent of the question of mining or metropolitan, because I think we ought to look upon a broad question in a broad light, and I cannot understand why those seven electorates, sparse electorates as they are, covering a big area as they do, should have only one member for 3,056 electors, having the other 21 members provided to represent 27,293 electors, or one member to every 1,299 electors. I think it would be fairly reasonable to take some such basis as I have suggested, and give one member to the densely-populated electorates for 3,000 of population, and one member for about 1,900 or 2,000 in the sparsely-populated electorates. As a special concession to the Northern electorates I would let there be one member to every 900 electors. I think that if we adopted some such basis as that, we might bring up a Bill that would be satisfactory to the public in this State for a few years to come, and would, at all events, avoid the necessity of another Redistribution of Seats Bill almost immediately the next Parliament meets.

That was the basis on which supporters of this amendment had been working during the last few days. Their desire was not, as alleged by the Minister for Lands, to wreck the Government; and he (Mr. Daglish) believed he could speak

for the cross-bench party when he said that sooner than see no redistribution at all, and the present Bill lost, they would be prepared to vote with the Government. He believed this schedule to be better than the existing system. That this was a party movement was untrue. If it were, the direct Government supporters would not be voting with the direct Opposition. If it were a party movement, then in all honesty the two supposed parties—Government and Opposition—ought to be brought together on one side of the House; for they were conspiring to blind the people as to the real issue. He would have declined to lend himself to the movement if its object had been to turn out a Ministry. He had always declined to cast a vote for the benefit of either the "outs" or the "ins." He voted for the advancement of some political principle—either to put a good law on the statute book or to keep off a bad one. If he had desired to wreck the Government he would have moved or would have supported a straight out vote of no confidence. Underhand work he did not believe in; and his only object was to secure a full recognition of the right of the people to control themselves; the right of the people to work out their destiny in their own fashion. It was not for him to justify the intelligence of the people; it was not for him to justify their claims to equal representation wherever they chose to live. He did not stand here to discuss what the representation of the various districts should be. We should settle the question of redistribution apart from industries, and we should settle it in such a fashion that it would give satisfaction to the great body of the people. We should recognise that a man had equal powers wherever he resided, and he might quote Mr. Reid who recently said, "We should recognise the principle of one vote one value." That was all he, as one member, had been struggling for during the last few days. The Minister for Lands had said that the member for the Murchison did not find him (the Minister) as pliable as other tools he had had an opportunity of handling. That indicated that the member for Cue and those supporting that gentleman were tools of the member for the Murchison. That was an unworthy

statement to emanate from any member of the Committee, conveying what was known by every member of the Committee to be an absolutely untruthful statement, conveying an untruthful meaning. It was well known in every section of the Committee that the proposal did not emanate from the member for the Murchison. It was a well known fact on both sides of the Committee that the first step in the direction of bringing this tangible issue before the Committee in the shape of a direct amendment was taken by the member for Kalgoorlie, who should therefore bear the blame or credit for having started that movement. To say it came from the member for the Murchison, or that the member for the Murchison used as tools other members of the House, was an insult not to the members accused of being tools but to the intelligence of the member who used it, and to the Government supporters and the Oppositionists who believed it. The accusation rebounded against those members who had made it. The Minister for Lands just now read a newspaper statement which was based on want of knowledge of what was placed before the Committee. The statement which the Minister for Lands had been reading indicated that there was very little difference between the proposals of the Government and those embodied in the scheme put forward by the member for Cue in the speech which he delivered in moving the amendment. There was just the same difference between the amendment and the Bill proposals as there was between the Bill proposals and the existing condition of affairs: in other words the Government scheme as amended by the select committee proposed to give four new members to the populous centres, while the scheme fathered by the member for Cue proposed to give another four members to the populous districts, and if there was no difference between the scheme propounded by the member for Cue and the scheme of the Government, then it might fairly be said by a parity of reasoning that there was no difference between the scheme of the Government and the existing state of affairs. If there was no justification for the alleged noise that the members of the Committee made in regard to this amendment, there was not the slightest occasion

for the fuss the Government made over the introduction of the amendment. The arguments introduced by the Minister for Lands destroyed the position as far as the Government were concerned if they were to be regarded as having any weight at all; but he was willing to go so far as to deny their weight to give the Government the benefit of the statement. In his opinion, even their share of improvement was a substantial advantage. He would very much regret seeing the Government Bill lost if the choice was one between the existing condition of affairs and the Government measure. He was speaking of the schedule under the consideration of the Committee. He recognised a very substantial gain in representation by the addition of four members to the populous centres; at the same time, in starting to give another four we were still compromising more than half way in regard to what should be called the legitimate demands of the people to representation. A great deal had been said about the divisions quoted by the member for Cue and others advocating these proposals. A great deal of capital had been made out of the question of what were agricultural seats, and what were not. He did not care what members called those seats. He did not think that it in any way affected the argument. The argument was, to what extent we were going to admit the right of the people to govern themselves. He did not care whether members called Albany a port or an agricultural seat, and the same in relation to Bunbury and Geraldton. It did not affect the rights of the people resident there to have a certain proportion of representation. What he could not understand was that if these places were purely ports, why should there not be a quota for every port in the State. The people residing in the port of Fremantle numbered 12,000 electors, and they were to have one member for every 3,000 electors. Those were approximately the figures. One member for every 3,000 persons in the port which happened to be called Fremantle; but the port of Albany was to have one member for 1,500 electors; the port of Geraldton was to have one member for 1,247 electors; and the port of Bunbury one for 1,682 electors. In other words the other ports had double the represen-

tation of the Fremantle port, and his argument was that if the interests—bringing it to a question of interests—if the interests of the people in these four ports were identical, why should not the representation be identical? Why should there be this great distinction between the people of Fremantle, and the people of Geraldton, Albany, and Bunbury, in regard to representation. We were told that really the people of the agricultural provinces were the chosen people of the State; they had the right to govern. He did not know where they got it from. He did not know whether the early settlers in the State bought it from the aborigines, or stole it from them; but they appeared to have come into possession of it in some fashion. Whatever representation was extended to those whose lot was not cast in this State in the early days was extended now as an act of benevolence. The old settlers and their representatives in the House did not recognise any right on the part of those who did not settle as early as themselves. Even though they shared the financial responsibility of citizenship here, the early settlers did not recognise that those obligations carried with them any rights. The peculiar thing about it was that the people in the country who were afraid of the people living in the populous centres, in regard to what we were led to believe by the Government was a party question, were blindly following a Government which did not contain a single agricultural representative. That we were governed at the present time by the best Ministry that could be got hold of, the agricultural representatives by their acts in this House admitted; and there was not a single agricultural representative in the Ministry in either Chamber. We found in fact that the Ministry was composed entirely of representatives of people of whom the agriculturists were afraid, whom they dared not trust, who they believed would do all sorts of things to wreck the prosperity first of all of the agricultural industry and secondly of the State itself. They arrogated to themselves the right to refuse equal representation to the people of populous centres on that ground; if not, there was no ground whatever for it; and seeing that they could bring about

so much better an understanding among all classes by granting this, it was folly on their part to resist it. The present Government comprised three metropolitan members, two goldfields members, and—using a designation which had been so persistently fought over by several agricultural members to-night—one port member; and not a single agricultural representative. It was admitted by the agricultural members not only of this Chamber but by agricultural members in all the oldest agricultural constituencies when they addressed their electors that the administration of the Lands Department was now practically ahead of what it had been at any previous stage of our history. The Minister for Lands was perhaps the most active, the most energetic, the most up-to-date man and successful administrator the Lands Department had yet had; and yet his constituents were regarded as persons not fit to exercise an equal share in the government of this country with those in the agricultural district. The whole position was absurd. There was neither reason nor logic in the argument introduced against this proposal. The only illustrations which had been brought forward in justification of the opposition to the proposal by the cross-benches for more liberal recognition of the people's rights were obsolete redistributions in which anomalies had grown up, just the same as they would grow up here within 12 months even if we introduced an absolutely correct redistribution on a strictly population basis. We had resurrected all sorts of figures of redistributions that occurred pretty well 10 or 15 years ago, and because anomalies were in them members seriously informed us—and Ministers among them—that because there were blots and patches in those different instances it was our duty to copy the blots and patches.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Would the amendment get rid of those anomalies?

**MR. MORAN:** Yes.

**MR. DAGLISH:** It would reduce them by just 100 per cent. more than the Government proposal would do. Members who objected knew very well that the reason of the objection was not

that the proposed amendment did not go far enough, but because it went too far, and whilst there had been a tremendous amount of uproar upon the amendment, mild as it was, if one more far-reaching were introduced there would be a howl of indignation from both sides far greater than we had heard within the last two or three days. If members wanted to go farther, he challenged them to show some genuine desire, he challenged them to introduce a better proposal. We at present had the choice between the schedule of the select committee and the improvement on that introduced by the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth). If they were not satisfied with the extent of the improvement, let them "go one better." The Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory) had said the proposal of the member for Cue was worse than the schedule. His (Mr. Daglish's) reply was that the only light in which it could be regarded as worse was that it gave greater power to the people of this State. The Minister put his finger on the point of difference between the two sides on this question—those who believed entirely in popular government, and those who disbelieved in it; those who, like the member for Williams (Hon. F. H. Piessé) advocated virtually an oligarchical form of government, who were willing to concede such an amount of government to the people as seemed to suit their immediate purposes and no more, and who were anxious to, if necessary, have the power to withdraw it. Whilst we had this very inequitable distribution we were not only refusing what was asked for at the present time, but we were leaving in the hands of a subsequent Parliament the power to withdraw from the populous centres even some of that representation which they at present possessed. The amendment of the member for Cue was a fair, reasonable, and just one, and he hoped the Committee would not accept the responsibility of rejecting it. At the same time he was afraid that the combination of the direct Opposition and the Government would secure its rejection. He could only express his very sincere regret that such a combination should exist and should be used in a matter which the Minister for Lands had assured us time after time in the most

emphatic tones was a party, and strictly party, question.

MR. STONE: As one of the four agricultural representatives representing the country north of Perth for about 400 miles by 170, he contended that to reduce the number of representatives from four to two was unjust and unfair, and he wished to record his vote for the amendment as a protest against the action of the agricultural members of the South.

MR. EWING: The member for Cue did not propose to give the district the hon. member referred to any more members.

MR. STONE: Those in the South proposed for themselves an extra member, and did not give any consideration to the interests of the country north of Perth. That country for about 400 miles by 150 was destined to be an agricultural district or country from end to end. It had a rainfall of from 30 to 15 inches, which was suitable for producing crops.

MR. BURGESS: In some seasons.

MR. STONE: All over the world there were droughts in some seasons. Considering the advantages the Southern districts had had for so many years, he thought it was time the North had some little consideration. A few years ago the Government purchased the Great Southern line with those lands at the cost of about a million and a half.

MR. BURGESS: £1,100,000.

MR. STONE: But when the line was purchased it had to be re-equipped; it had to be re-sleepered from end to end with jarrah sleepers; so that in round numbers the figures came to £1,500,000.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: The additional cost referred to was only £41,000.

MR. STONE: The members of the Southern district had the benefit of that re-purchase, and not only so but they had had the advantage of about 96 per cent. of the funds provided by this Parliament for the Agricultural Bank. That money had been piled into those districts in undue proportions, and it would be very interesting to know who had been benefited by it.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS said he would give the hon. member the names.

MR. STONE: The figures had been asked for by him, and they were not satisfactory. It was anyhow an undue advantage in cash to that part of the

State over other parts. Again, with regard to the repurchase money, something like £150,000 had been fired into those districts, particularly York, Northam, the Williams, and all the Southern districts, and nobody knew that better than the member for York.

MR. BURGESS: They must have been asleep in the North.

MR. STONE: They were honest in the North. They had tried to get a repurchase in the North, but it was almost a surgical operation. Thanks to the present Minister for Lands they had obtained it after a fight against a hostile board, a board appointed from the Southern districts, which looked with hostility against anything for the North. With regard also to the drainage vote, £10,000 or £15,000 a year had been spent in draining the Southern districts, the people's cash going in many cases to benefit private people. Again, those in power, when the railway rate known as the long-distance rate was brought into force to tap the consuming centres, brought their districts within reach of the consuming centres to the disadvantage of those districts much closer to them. For instance, produce could be sent from York to Cue for very little more than it could be sent from Greenough.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: It applied all round.

MR. STONE: These were his principal complaints against the agriculturists of the South. It was their grab-all propensities of manipulating the cash of the State for their particular advantage he objected to. The sooner a power came into force to take the matter in hand the better for the whole country. He was not voting on this matter as a protest against the Government, but as a protest—

MR. HAYWARD: Was the hon. member speaking to the question before the House?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was no farther away from it than others had been.

MR. STONE: It was the agricultural members like the member for Bunbury and several others who were the people milking the cow which others held for them. He would not let anybody make a catpaw of him, unless he had a share of the mts. He regretted very much the remarks of the member for the Williams

on one or two occasions during the debate, for he seemed to throw a slight on anything North, and referred to its drought and to the fact that there was very little land there any good.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: No such statement could be attributed to him.

MR. STONE: At the time the member for the Williams visited the Northern districts all his experience had been confined to serving out sugar.

MR. BURGESS: The proposal of the Government should be supported. The matter had been fully argued and could be argued for a week, but arguments would not alter the opinion of members who were determined to carry out their own particular proposals. The member for Cue had failed to bring forward any details of his scheme.

MR. TAYLOR: The details had been explained.

MR. BURGESS: The member for Mount Margaret had said more State aid was given to our agriculturists than to those in any other part of Australia or in New Zealand. If the hon. member read the Eastern newspapers he would know that New Zealand agriculturists were far better treated by the Government, which went to the extent of finding them markets; and generous treatment was accorded to agriculture in Victoria, New South Wales, and even South Australia. Only a few thousand pounds had been spent here in aiding agriculture; though the South of this State was as well adapted to the butter industry as any part of Victoria or New South Wales. South Australia was a dry country; yet it exported butter, and carried on other industries, such as the frozen meat trade. Similar industries could be started here if reasonable assistance were given to agriculturists. The member for West Perth had asked why we should fear the people. We did not fear the people, especially the goldfields people. Having visited the goldfields, he found that the opinion of every sensible man he met was that the Government here did more for the goldfields than was done for goldfields anywhere else. The member for Mount Margaret had said his party wanted only fair representation. They wanted all the representation. The whole country had been mortgaged to carry out large

schemes for the goldfields; and if the goldfields failed, the permanent settlers in the country would have to "pay the piper." Of that the old inhabitants were not afraid; but the chief industries of the country must be given adequate representation, mining first and agriculture next. The 13 or 14 metropolitan members would support the mining members, thus giving the goldfields more than ample representation; and why should an industry which would ultimately be the chief industry of the country be deliberately injured? It was satisfactory to note that goldfields people were settling all over the country. The gold came from our own territory, and ought to be used to develop our territory. [MR. DIAMOND: What an old fossil.] The hon. member was evidently a remnant of the great fossil whale which was found years ago at Fremantle. It had come to life again and had been returned as a parliamentary representative. What greater proof than that of the need for being cautious in giving additional representation? How did the goldfields vote on Federation? Did they consider the member for West Perth, who was like a machine wound up and would go on speaking for ever, and when anyone interjected he only hurled dust and mud at them as fast as he could. The hon. member supported the agriculturists, and took up a strong position in regard to Federation. The agriculturist thanked the hon. member for that, but it was no use for the hon. member, after travelling round the world, to come back here trying to silence everyone in the House. [MR. MORAN: Oh, shut up.] No; he would speak until morning if need be. The amendment was to lower the agricultural interest of the country. One found in the returns of the Lands Department for 1902 that an enormous increase in land selection had taken place during the last four years. [MR. TAYLOR: What had that to do with the Bill?] By the amendment some members wished to lower the agricultural industry in the eyes of the world; they wished to make out that the agricultural industry was only a paltry one, and not worthy fair representation. He (Mr. Burgess) wanted to see every industry represented. The member for the Murchison referred to the money which had been spent, and accused members, in-

cluding himself, as those who had caused the expenditure of this money.

MR. CONNOR: The hon. member came here to protest against the action of the party he was now supporting.

MR. BURGESS: That was denied. It was all very well for the hon. member, a great fighting Irishman, to sit here and say that. The constituency of York had sent him to this House to support the Government; he was here to do it, and he would do so until he saw a party more fitted to carry on the administration of the country.

MR. MORAN: It was to be hoped the hon. member would not introduce into this Chamber the tactics which so long disgraced another place.

MR. BURGESS: What he had been referring to was the accusation of the member for the Murchison against the agriculturists of supporting the Administration in wasting the money of the country. In regard to money being spent in the towns and on the goldfields, if the members representing those places did not get what they wanted a great disturbance was made, and was kept up until the request was granted. He remembered a Bill going to another place providing for the expenditure of £200,000 for the purchase of the Perth Waterworks. That was one of the greatest blots that had occurred in the administration of the country, and he was the only one in another place who objected to it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What about the Greenhills railway?

MR. BURGESS: That would open up good country, and it only cost a paltry £60,000. The member for the Murchison had referred to the expenditure of money with the idea of showing that large sums had been spent by the Government with the support of the agriculturists; but large sums of money had been spent in the metropolis, at Fremantle, and on the goldfields; and those who supported the spending of money at those places were the agricultural members of the House. Only the other day £50,000 was voted for Perth; country members could not get £50,000 voted for their electorates. The Perth Waterworks, which were purchased for £200,000, could hardly pay the interest and sinking fund. He would support the second

schedule of the Bill brought forward by the select committee. It was very easy to get up and speak on a popular cry, and to advocate that the country constituencies should not have the same representation as more populous centres. We should look to our interests as agricultural members. We should advocate the representation of every one of the flourishing industries in the country. We knew what had taken place in the South-West and along the Great Southern railway, also along the Eastern railway, where enormous areas of Government land had been taken up and great development had followed. The agriculturists were to have 19 seats in this House, taking in two or three constituencies representing ports which had nothing to do with agriculture. The town of Geraldton was pretty well supported by the mines on the Murchison and surrounding districts.

MR. JACOBY: Every man who was not a Labour man must be an agriculturist. That was how they scored.

MR. BURGESS believed in every part having fair representation. In this Bill the goldfields would have 16 or 17 members, the metropolitan area 13, and the North four. That was 34, which left only 16 for agriculture.

MR. TAYLOR: For 27,000 or 28,000 voters.

MR. BURGESS: Those were producing people. Those were the people keeping the metropolis as well as the goldfields people. There could be no metropolis and no port unless there was a country.

MR. MORAN: The agricultural portion lived on the metropolis, which took their produce.

MR. BURGESS: There was not the slightest doubt this Bill would be carried, and the Government would come back stronger than ever.

[1 o'clock, a.m.]

MR. ATKINS: This was a most extraordinary way of debating an important subject, one of the most important we could have before us—that was, either quarrelling or laughing. Was that the way for a lot of reasonable men to act? As to the question between the agriculturists, the mining, and the towns, his feeling was that those people who had a stake in the country ought to have the most to say in governing it. A large

number of people on the goldfields and also in the towns were only a nomadic population. If at any period we had bad times in the mines, a large number of those people would leave the State, whereas the people anchored on the land and having investments in the country would have to stay, and these were therefore the people who should have the most say in the government. We knew very well that a lot of our artisans were now leaving the country for South Africa. The same class of men had left Victoria to come here, and if it suited them they would leave Western Australia. The population of this country were not all alike, they were not all in the same position; some were fixed and some were unfixed. Why should a man or woman who came here to exploit the country, and who would go away after making a little money, have as much say in the government of the country as people who always lived here?

MR. DIAMOND: When they went away they could not vote.

MR. ATKINS: Even now a number of people who claimed to have as much say in this country as had old residents were earning money here and sending it away to the other States, doing no good to this State, but really doing good to the other States and milking Western Australia. He could quite understand the Labour party posing as democrats, and being democrats, because they represented the worker, but as to others who were running this democracy show, did they ever do a day's work in their lives? He believed in sticking to his class. Let the Labour people stick to their class, as they did; and they did it well. Why should people go back from their class and pretend to be democrats when they were not? They were trying to hoodwink the Labour party by trying to be democrats. The Labour party would use them as long as they wanted them, and, when they had done with them, would throw them off like an old glove. The people with the most stake in the country should have the most to say in governing it, and it should not be said that the man who came here to-day and went away to-morrow was as good as them. There were men voting for the government of the country who were receiving alms. It was a shame that people who put their money into the

country were to be put on the same footing as such. If that was democracy, he was not with it.

MR. YELVERTON: The scheme put before the House by the Government would receive his support. Looking at it, and taking the figures as they had been compiled by the responsible officers of the Government, it showed that interests were fully represented, and that population was represented on a fairly equitable basis. It was sufficient for him. On the other hand those who had been termed cave-dwellers had not pointed out what their proposals were. He had heard in a round-about way that they proposed to amalgamate some of the agricultural districts, and to divide the constituencies so gained by adding two to the mining electorates and one or two to the metropolitan-suburban districts. What had the agricultural members done in the past that their numbers should be reduced? Who had supported the public-spirited policy of Sir John Forrest? The agriculturists. Who were the men shoulder to shoulder with him? Were his Ministers not chiefly representing agricultural interests? They had supported Sir John Forrest when he was not frightened to carry out large public works. It was the agricultural members who had carried out the policy of building a railway to the goldfields and who, in conjunction with Sir John Forrest, had determined to carry out the Fremantle Harbour Works, and they had backed up the Forrest Ministry when it was determined to carry out the Coolgardie Water Scheme. All these great works had been carried out by the representatives of the agricultural constituencies, whom it was now proposed to condemn. Therefore he supported the Government in carrying out the scheme of redistribution, as it had been licked into shape by the Opposition. He was astonished at the attitude taken up by the member for West Perth and the member for the Murchison. The member for West Perth had fought many hard battles for agriculture which did honour to him, but now he had some sore feeling, engendered by what he did not know, and now he was not getting support from the Opposition seats attacked agricultural members, and endeavoured to throw in his lot with the irreconcilable members on

the Labour benches, simply because, at the next general election, he could have a cry on which to go to his constituents. The hon. member's change reflected no credit on him. It was to be regretted that the member for the Murchison had taken up a somewhat similar attitude.

MR. CONNOR: There was one phase of the question which had not yet come before the House, and he would fail in his duty as a representative of the North for the last ten years, and as one of the oldest members of the House, if he did not put the question before the people. The representation given to the North, containing nearly a half of the State, and with over a third of the coast line, was that the pastoralists were only getting two members, one for the Gascoyne and one for Roebourne. The representative for Kimberley would not represent pastoralists. He must be elected by the black-labour crowd around Broome. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] The Premier said "hear, hear," although when in Opposition the Premier had complimented him on a speech against coloured labour, delivered eleven years ago. This was in keeping with every political action of which the Premier had been guilty during the last few months. Why were we disfranchising the North, and particularly the Kimberleys? Of two evils we should choose the less; and that was the cross-benches scheme. Why disfranchise the North? Were not property, area, stock, and exports worthy of consideration? The exports of the North were phenomenal. From Wyndham 20,000 head of cattle, worth £200,000, had been exported, and possibly as many from Derby. Other exports were sheep, wool, and pearlshell; and there would be large exports of tin and copper. And was the golden country of the North not worthy of consideration? Within a few weeks there would be a big rush to a spot in the Northern Territory near the Kimberley border. Yet the Kimberleys were to have only two votes. If he and the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pigott) contested the latter's seat, the hon. member would beat him because of the hon. member's attitude on coloured labour. But some of the hon. member's constituents would want to know why he had said that the North should have only two representatives.

MR. PIGOTT: Nothing of the kind had been said by him.

MR. CONNOR: The hon. member would be asked some awkward questions. Doubtless he would win in a contest for one of those two seats from him (Mr. Connor); but if he did win, it would be on the question of coloured labour, and for no other reason. When the Premier first came into power he was regarded as the leader of the "young Australia" party, and had reform and retrenchment for his watchwords. He had not carried out his promises. The amendment approached more closely to a population basis than did the schedule as printed. If the Bill were passed on a purely population basis, he (Mr. Connor) would let the North and every other district take their chance. If the people demanded such a basis of representation, they must have it. It was no use representatives of property like himself thinking they could do as they liked. The voice of the people would be supreme at the finish. It seemed peculiar that members representing city constituencies should oppose an amendment to give more representation to the metropolis. Must there not be some illegitimate political influence at work? The Minister for Lands had made a regrettable exhibition of himself; and had better keep his speeches free from vulgarity.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The provocation was great; and the hon. member had not heard what had been said previously by the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson).

MR. CONNOR: The Minister started by saying that the member for the Murchison went out of the Leake party on the toe of Mr. Leake's boot. All honour to the hon. member for resenting that accusation. He wished now to refer to something that appeared to be unique—the spectacle of the whips of the Opposition party and the Government party working towards one end, and doing all they could in the face of the reform party in the House, and in favour of a Redistribution of Seats Bill which was a disgrace to the country.

MR. PURKISS: This State, like all States, had been fighting for years to get manhood suffrage, one man one vote, and to destroy what had been known as plural voting. We had got manhood suffrage, and were now on the eve of obtaining one

man one vote. That was what all modern countries were striving for. If we attained one adult one vote, why should we begin to cut that vote into half or quarter or one-eighth? What was the use of having struggled for years to get adult suffrage, and as soon as we got it to cut it into portions, as was proposed in the Bill? What was the use of adult suffrage if we were going to pare it down. Better not grant it. The logical sequence of one man one vote was representation upon a population basis. That was an eternal truth; that was the natural result, otherwise it was nonsense. Where did we stand to-day outside the Bill? Look at the number of electors on the State rolls. Was there any principle there? It was a hotch potch, an anomaly, an ambiguity, and an absurdity. According to the second column of figures which members had before them, there were 661 electors who had all the privileges as far as communication was concerned, and who had the same voting power as 7,000 electors. It had been recognised for the last three years that we should get reform, but no honest endeavour had been made to get reform on any side of the House. All that was attempted last session was an absolute sham. The Bill that was passed last session was an absolute sham, and now in the expiring days of the present Parliament we had to say that we had done something on account of what had been promised to the electors two or three years ago, but this reform Bill was no reform at all; that was admitted. What did the organ of the country party say, what did the organ of the Ministry say in yesterday's issue? There was no difference between the programme put forward by the cave party and the Opposition-cum-Government proposal. First of all there was a Ministerial programme giving 47 members to this House; then there was the Opposition programme of 50 members, which was the proposal before the Committee at the present time, and then there was the caves party programme. The Ministerial organ and the organ of the country party announced that there was no difference between the programmes of these different parties. It was a case of tweedledum and tweedledee. That was surprising in view of the debate which had taken place in the House, and the feeling that had

been created, the difference of opinion, and the heat which had been engendered, because if there was no difference in the programme why these tears and this trouble? The Ministerial organ went on to say that the basic principle of the cave party was not in the direction of representation on a population basis. Therefore the programme of the Ministry had no principle on a population basis. Then that organ farther said the motion was an attack on the country party. If the motion was an attack on the country party, then the Ministerial programme and the Opposition programme combined must also be an attack on the country party, the combined programme being tweedledee and tweedledum. This was, according to the *West Australian*, an attack from the three parties on the country party. If that was logic, he did not know what logic was. He had been trying to get a clear-cut issue on the various questions which had been propounded, and he obtained it so far as the expressions of opinions of the various members who had spoken could give it. The country party no doubt was represented to the largest extent by the member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) and the member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse). The member for Beverley had stated that he wanted increased representation for the country and decreased representation of the metropolitan and populous districts, because the metropolitan districts had more intelligence, their wits were keener, and they were able better to look after their own wants than the country members. Consequently so far as that member was concerned the clear-cut issue was intelligence *versus* stupidity. When we come to his lieutenant, another champion of the country party, his clear-cut issue was acres against numbers, acres against men.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Nothing of the sort had been said by him.

MR. PURKISS: The hon. member did say so. Every member noted it, and several members had commented upon it.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: It was only a joke.

MR. PURKISS: Then we should not joke. No doubt now it was pointed out, and it would be used against him, and would fly from one corner of the State to the other. The hon. member was ashamed

of it and wanted to recant. No doubt the member for Beverley would come to-morrow and make an explanation that the people of the metropolis were not so intelligent as country people.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: In reply to the hon. member he said, "Yes, that is it," just for a bit of fun.

MR. PURKISS: The amendment proposed by the member for Cue was a very moderate one. They tried to get representation nearer to a population basis. At present, taking the State rolls, six hundred and sixty-one electors in Beverley were considered equal to 7,000 in Hannans.

MR. PIGOTT: Under the present Bill Beverley would have 2,000.

MR. PURKISS: The Government came down with a scheme of 47 members, and they had taken that back.

THE PREMIER: There was no alteration as far as the gold-mining constituencies were concerned.

MR. PURKISS: Yes, 47 made an alteration. We had got up to a state of friction. He did not know why it should be a question of town against country. He never heard of it in any other State, and it was a most unfortunate thing that in this debate the question of town against country had been raised. Taking the old roll, the country party would be in a hopeless minority. That being so, they had in no way been penalised. They had from start to finish, ever since he had been in this country, everything they had asked for; they had had railways made to their very doors, they had been able to retain the food duties and sliding scale, the Government had been induced to preserve differential rates upon their products, they had had agricultural halls built right throughout their districts, they had had schools built, and they had aid and help in every way. Absolutely nothing had been denied them. They had got these things in spite of the fact that they had been in a hopeless minority during the last 10 years. In the face of that, what was the use of talking about town and country? Who had voted for the money to supply the Great Southern line to the agriculturists? [MR. PIGOTT: The agricultural members.] They could not do it

by themselves because they were in a hopeless minority. Nobody outside a lunatic asylum would consider there was friction between the two parties, because one lived on the other. New Zealand had as nearly approached a population basis in its representation as could be. At every census there was an adjustment of seats. They had an automatic scheme of a board of five commissioners outside of Parliamentary influence, who took the population and divided it by the number of seats, allowing 18 per cent. loading in respect of special districts—the King country, Stewart Island, and the fjord country in the south-west of South Island. This had been the law of the land since 1887, and there had never been a word said about town and country or goldfields, and it was a colony with a large mining population. It was an admittedly democratic country, and the Government did all it could to foster agricultural and pastoral interests. Could a city live upon itself? Impossible. He ended as he began. Agricultural interests had been in a hopeless minority; yet look at the public works constructed for their benefit. Consider the railways built through their districts, and the new railways for which they were asking. The proposed Collie railway was said to be a mining line; but the cry of its advocates was that it would open up agricultural country along the route. The agriculturists had their grants-in-aid, their agricultural halls, their roads, their bridges, their schools; and what had they to fear? As for the sympathy which agriculturists had for the other interests, had not they retained their sliding scale and their food duties, and that dishonourable impost which was contrary to the very principle of Federation, preferential railway rates? Yet we asked the other States to exhibit a federal spirit, though we were showing a pretty federal spirit by imposing railway rates and customs duties on the products of South Australia and other States of the Commonwealth. Consider the squabble with the Commonwealth raised by this Government over a few shillings of rent for some rooms in the post office taken over by the Federal Government. Such "chickens" came home to roost. He (Mr. Purkiss) long ago pointed out that it would have paid us to abolish the

sliding scale and the preferential rates, and to give up those rooms to the Federal Government. In spite of our anti-federal action in these matters, the Premier talked of a federal spirit. The worst day's work we had ever done was done during the last two or three weeks, when we raised this cry of town against country; for hitherto the country never asked anything which it did not get, because, though in a hopeless minority, country members had the sympathy of metropolitan representatives; but now, owing to the country members' attitude, there would be a cleavage; and to-night's discussion had sounded the death-knell of the Collie railway. This debate would, unfortunately, bring about a union between the goldfields and the metropolitan representatives, and the country members would have to look after their own interests. The line of cleavage created to-night would be only too apparent in future. This scheme was a farce when we talked of a population basis. Our attempt to improve it was only an inch in a yard, and yet those opposed to us would not concede it. That only brought about disturbance. The seed had been sown. We heard the apostle of the agriculturists talking about intelligence *versus* stupidity as a clean cut issue, and another member talking about acres *versus* men. That kind of argument would go to the four corners of the State, and when that had been considered by the electors of the State the seed of trouble would be sown, and would bring about a battle which would result in grave disaster. What did we mean by manhood suffrage? Why should every adult man be entitled to a vote? Because it was an eternal truth that everyone who had to obey the laws of the country and pay taxes should have a voice in the making of the laws and the creation of those taxes and the appropriation of them. That was the basis of adult suffrage. It was right, honest, just, honourable, and pure. No one could contravene it, and it would be unjust to cut into three or four pieces a man's vote. That was why all civilised nations tried to obtain representation on a population basis as near as possible. A line of cleavage had never been drawn in this House until this last fortnight. The cause of the cleavage was said to be that members on the cross-benches had

put their heads together in order to injure the country party. That was what the Ministerial organ said. That was what the member for Williams said, and what the member for Beverley said. It was a most unfortunate thing, because it was the first time in the history of the country that such a line of cleavage had been caused. There was friction between the country party and the other two parties in the House.

[2 o'clock, a.m.]

MR. MORAN: It must give great joy to everybody that the debate had closed. The country would see that a line of cleavage had been made. To all intents and purposes the direct Opposition and the Government were one party. He had not expected to see in this Chamber the Premier tweaked by the nose and taunted by the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pigott), as was seen to-night when the leader of the Opposition told them that he did not care a jot what the Government thought, that this Bill was shaped by the direct Opposition, and if the Government dared to reply to that, the direct Opposition would put them out. There was also the extraordinary exhibition of the Premier of this State, surrounded by faithful followers and henchmen who had done their best for him, yet taunted in this House with having, when a vacancy occurred, crossed the floor and sought to get into his Cabinet the most able opponent on the Opposition side. He commended that incident to those who were so loyally following the Premier, and he commended it to the country. Not only did the Premier seek an alliance with the direct Opposition openly, but did so secretly. The hon. gentleman evidently sought an alliance with one who was certainly the ablest man in this House up to date in Opposition—the member for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson). This would show the country that there was something underneath the antagonism expressed to-night by the member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins) and the member for the Murchison.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; nothing—absolutely nothing.

MR. MORAN: The debate had shown that the present Government were not

prepared to trust the people. It had shown there was a party in the House prepared to trust them. That party did not sit in direct Opposition, and the country would demand probably in the future an Opposition based on the true principles of government, an Opposition prepared on any and every opportunity to put the Government out if they did not believe in them. That was the function of an Opposition. If they honestly disbelieved in the virtue of the Government, they should consider how to remove the Government from power. The discussion had awakened public interest in public matters in our State Parliament, and that would do no harm in the country. Let us have the good old party lines. Let us have an earnest Opposition and a good Government, but beyond all things let us have two parties who were at war with each other. When there was an earnest Opposition the Government would be well watched, but if we had an Opposition which was not earnest, it was possible that arrangements would be come to, as had been done in the case of this Bill. If a coalition might be formed on this, the country might ask what might a coalition not be formed upon, and how would they get at the truth? He supposed we must all regret the little exhibition of feeling between the two hon. members. He was sure the member for Boulder had brought it on his own head largely.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** The member for Boulder was quite satisfied.

**MR. MORAN:** But for that little incident this debate had, he thought, been conducted on lines which would leave no antipathy whatever. We had exhibited the best good humour. There had been one or two little tiffs, but they were of no importance. Any Government in power would always have a tame majority, but he thought that no regrets would be left behind. He felt positively certain that good had been done to the country, and as far as he was concerned he would be very glad if the matter were brought to an end. We had discussed the main question, and he did not think it would take very long to debate the other small amendments.

**MR. DIAMOND** rose to speak, but there being signs of disapproval, he moved

that progress be reported. [**MEMBERS:** "Go on."] ]

Motion (progress) put and negatived.

**MR. DIAMOND:** After waiting so patiently for a considerable time last Tuesday evening and this evening, and giving way to a number of members, he was very sorry that he should be ostensibly refused to be allowed to say anything more. [**MEMBERS:** No.] He did not think he had inflicted himself very much on the House during the last two and a half years, and at this early hour in the morning he would not inflict himself but for the fact that he recognised it was the wish of everybody present to bring the thing to a close this morning. He would like to say it appeared to him that the bulk of the members of this House, if not all, were returned two and a half years ago pledged to a redistribution of seats on a population basis. He was. He made that pledge to his constituents, and it was his duty on this occasion to do all he could to carry out the pledge he made. Apparently the Government had not adopted a reasonable course in this matter. These matters were not brought forward in a manner hostile to the Government. A number of staunch loyal Government supporters on these cross-benches took particular care that such could not be the case, even if their friends on the other side wanted it to be so. These amendments were brought forward for the simple purpose of improving the measure, and, in his opinion, a little more consideration should have been paid to the desire of the Government supporters on these cross-benches than had been paid by the Government.

[**MR. HARPER** took the Chair.]

**MR. DIAMOND:** So far there had been no sign of this being a party measure. It was simply an attempt on the part of a number of private members to secure fair representation to the people of the State. The Government need not sacrifice any dignity if they accepted the fair and reasonable proposals outlined by the member for Cue. Although members were pledged to redistribution on a population basis, they must recognise that they had to bow somewhat to the circumstances, and as reasonable men did not attempt to make it absolute. The

proposition put forward by the member for Cue would be a battle cry for the forthcoming general elections. He would pledge himself to make it so, as far as he was concerned. It was a great mistake on the part of the Government to resist proper representation, seeing that it must come eventually. One said it with respect, but a great deal too much weight was attached to the power of the Labour party. The great power in the State was the power of democracy, and it would speak at the general election, after which some members now sitting in the House would be sadder and wiser men. There was no possibility of any injustice being done by the metropolis to the other portions of the State. On the contrary, the other interests in the State would receive more than a fair and reasonable justice from the metropolis. One could not understand the attitude of the member for Claremont or his political gyrations. One could not know whether he was a democrat, a Labour member, or an aristocrat. The member for York was wrong when he talked of the wheat duties in New South Wales. The member for the South-West Mining refused to extend to his own constituency the principle of representation according to population. If the hon. member forgot his pledges, the electors would remember them at the next general election. This hint might benefit the Minister for Lands also, who should show less contempt for the opinions of those who differed from him. Pass the amendment of the member for Cue, and let it be a cue for the second schedule of the Bill. There had been an unholy alliance between the Government and the direct Opposition. The trail of the serpent was over the whole of this Bill. He (Mr. Diamond) asked the majority of the House to support this fair, reasonable, and honourable compromise offered by the cross benches.

[Mr. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

MR. TAYLOR: As a member of the Labour party, he maintained that the amendment was distinctly to the advantage of the goldfields, and he regretted that the talkative leader of the Labour party (Mr. Hastie) had, during this debate, refrained from expressing his views, and was now absent. The Premier might be

able to enlighten the House as to what were those views. This Bill was the Bill of the leader of the Opposition, with whom it was to be hoped the leader of the Labour party was not allied. As there would be no opportunity of hearing the hon. member's (Mr. Hastie's) views, he (Mr. Taylor) could not allow the amendment to be put without expressing regret at this circumstance.

Question—that the word “Beaconsfield” be inserted after the word “Balcatta”—put, and a division taken.

[Explanations ensued.]

MR. DIAMOND said he paired with the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) and wished the pair recorded.

THE CHAIRMAN: Pairs were not under the control of the Committee, but of the Whips.

MR. TAYLOR: Was it the custom in this Chamber, when the Chairman of Committees and a Deputy Chairman of Committees alternately took the Chair, that the Chairman of Committees should at every division be allowed to record his vote, while the Deputy Chairman was on such occasions popped into the Chair so that his vote was lost? That had been done last night, and was repeated to-night.

MR. MORAN protested against this practice, which was most unfair. The Chairman of Committees was voting on a question which affected his own constituency.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Illingworth): The Speaker was absent. The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Harper) was Deputy Speaker, and would have to act as Speaker in receiving the report from Committee. The circumstances were regrettable, but were unavoidable in view of the order and custom of the House.

MR. PIGOTT had arranged to pair off a member with the member now in the Chair.

Division resulted as follows:—

|                  |     |     |     |    |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes             | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| Noes             | ... | ... | ... | 24 |
|                  |     |     |     | —  |
| Majority against | ... |     |     | 13 |

| AYES.                | NOES.                |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Mr. Bath             | Mr. Atkins           |
| Mr. Daglish          | Mr. Burges           |
| Mr. Holman           | Mr. Butcher          |
| Mr. Johnson          | Mr. Ewing            |
| Mr. Moran            | Mr. Ferguson         |
| Mr. Nanson           | Mr. Foulkes          |
| Mr. Oats             | Mr. Gardiner         |
| Mr. Purkiss          | Mr. Gordon           |
| Mr. Reid             | Mr. Gregory          |
| Mr. Taylor           | Mr. Harper           |
| Mr. Connor (Teller). | Mr. Hassell          |
|                      | Mr. Hayward          |
|                      | Mr. Higham           |
|                      | Mr. Hopkins          |
|                      | Mr. James            |
|                      | Mr. O'Connor         |
|                      | Mr. Phillips         |
|                      | Mr. Plesse           |
|                      | Mr. Pigott           |
|                      | Mr. Rason            |
|                      | Mr. Smith            |
|                      | Mr. Thomas           |
|                      | Mr. Yelverton        |
|                      | Mr. Jacoby (Teller). |

Amendment thus negatived.

MR. MORAN: Though the fight was over, and there was no intention so far as he knew on the part of those moving in this matter to do more than formally move the other amendments, yet at this stage it was fair that progress should be reported. He moved that progress be reported.

THE PREMIER: The main division of opinion had been not so much on the actual boundaries of the existing electorates, but on the question as a whole. The whole discussion had been as to whether the scheme as a whole was good or bad. Having dealt with that question, the only other question remaining was one of boundaries. There might be one or two electorates where it was desirable to strike out or alter boundaries. He knew the Labour party wished to deal with the Forrest electorate, which involved a question of opinion; but we might get on with the Bill. Perhaps members thought that certain boundaries could be dealt with on recommittal. If so, what objection was there to deal now with the electorates in connection with which there was no controversy?

MR. PURKISS: It was desired to deal with the electorate of Balcatta.

THE PREMIER: Would that raise a question of principle?

MR. MORAN: It would not raise the whole question.

THE PREMIER: If the old principle was to be fought over again, better go on with the fight.

Motion (progress) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

|      |     |     |     |    |
|------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| Noes | ... | ... | ... | 25 |

Majority against ... 14

| AYES.                 | NOES.                |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Mr. Bath              | Mr. Atkins           |
| Mr. Connor            | Mr. Burges           |
| Mr. Diamond           | Mr. Butcher          |
| Mr. Holman            | Mr. Ewing            |
| Mr. Johnson           | Mr. Ferguson         |
| Mr. Moran             | Mr. Foulkes          |
| Mr. Nanson            | Mr. Gardiner         |
| Mr. Oats              | Mr. Gordon           |
| Mr. Purkiss           | Mr. Gregory          |
| Mr. Taylor            | Mr. Harper           |
| Mr. Daglish (Teller). | Mr. Hassell          |
|                       | Mr. Hayward          |
|                       | Mr. Higham           |
|                       | Mr. Hopkins          |
|                       | Mr. James            |
|                       | Mr. O'Connor         |
|                       | Mr. Phillips         |
|                       | Mr. Plesse           |
|                       | Mr. Pigott           |
|                       | Mr. Rason            |
|                       | Mr. Reid             |
|                       | Mr. Smith            |
|                       | Mr. Thomas           |
|                       | Mr. Yelverton        |
|                       | Mr. Jacoby (Teller). |

Motion (progress) thus negatived.

[3 o'clock, a.m.]

MR. MORAN: After a big battle like this it was a courtesy due from the Government to the opponents who were defeated to give an adjournment. He had no desire to pursue this question any more, and he assured the Premier that as far as he was personally concerned, the hon. gentleman need not dread a motion to report progress. After having had an honourable battle, he would not raise his voice again to effect any amendment in the schedule. They were entitled to an adjournment to mark the end of this great question.

THE PREMIER: Why not make some progress?

MR. MORAN: When Sir John Forrest was in office, and a battle had been fought, was it not always the custom to grant an adjournment? This was the first battle we had really had on a straight-out issue of this kind, and he thought they were entitled to consideration at the hands of a majority of this House. The Premier knew that if they had wanted to keep this going, nothing would have been easier than to do so. They could not have arrived at a decision earlier than they had done. The Minister for Lands prolonged the debate four

hours by his intemperate speech. He did not blame the hon. gentleman.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** The hon. member's speeches were most temperate, were they not?

**MR. MORAN:** There was a slight difference in the positions of the two. The party to which he (Mr. Moran) belonged had to put up the fight. They had to bear the odium of being called obstructors of public business. But in what other way could they do it? He repeated that at the end of a battle of this kind it was, as far as he could remember, usual to show grace to one's opponents.

**MR. JOHNSON** moved as an amendment,

That the words "Beverley electoral district" be struck out.

He did so because he thought it was absolutely necessary that those who had been fighting this question should show exactly where they thought electorates should be combined in the agricultural districts, with a view of giving those districts so struck out to more populous centres. He had no desire to go on to the main question again, and he hoped that no other member who had been in this battle would do so. He did not want any lengthy debates on these amendments, but it was necessary to demonstrate to the country what they proposed. Those who had been testing this question thought that Beverley should be joined to York and the electorate perhaps called by a different name from Beverley or York. It might be called the Avon Electoral District. Those two electorates could be joined together. Members admitted that the boundaries of other electorates would have to be altered in order to take some of the population, through the combination of the Beverley and York electorates, and distribute it over some other electorates in order to get a more uniform number of votes. He did not think it was necessary to go into that question, except to say that it could be done and it should be done; that there were not sufficient electors in Beverley and York for those two places to be separate electorates. The two electorates could be joined, and by that combination a member could be given to the populous

centres. It might be argued—and perhaps there would be some ground for the argument—that there should not be a new electorate in Fremantle. But he thought it was clear—and members wanted to make it clear to the public—that they only resorted to the word "Beaconsfield" in order to raise a general discussion. They had had a general discussion, and to show exactly what they proposed he had moved that "Beverley District" be struck out with the view of joining that district to the York electorate district.

**MR. PURKISS** said he would second that. Looking at the numbers on the census rolls nothing short of a public scandal would be brought about by giving Beverley with 903 electors a member and York with 1,243 electors a member.

**MR. BURGESS:** The number for Beverley on the federal rolls was 1,177.

**MR. PURKISS:** The number for Beverley on the federal rolls was 1,177, on the State rolls 661, and on the census rolls 903. The census rolls gave the names with the additions up to the 28th March, 1903, and according to those census rolls the number for Beverley was 903. According to that we put 903 voters on a par with the thousands in the metropolitan and goldfields districts. York had 1,200 voters, so that the two districts combined did not make anything like a goldfields or metropolitan district. There was no justice in that. It was a public scandal. The member for Beverley thought that there should be a vote for the ignorant people in his district.

**MR. NANSON** called attention to the presence of strangers. The Government were willing to kill members, but there were others compelled to remain in the House who should not be killed.

**THE CHAIRMAN** directed the Sergeant-at-Arms to do his duty.

[The Sergeant-at-Arms entered the galleries, and ordered strangers to withdraw.]

**MR. PURKISS:** It was possible that a schedule of this character should be carried in the House, considering that the amendment was opposed by ignorant dunderheads who were not on a par in intelligence with the metropolitan or the

goldfields people. It was hopeless to attempt in a House of this character to carry the amendment; but he had drawn attention to the facts for the benefit of the people outside the House; and particularly would public attention be directed to members of the calibre of the member for Beverley (Mr. Harper), and to the manner in which that member stigmatised his country constituents. A great object had been achieved by drawing public attention to the scandalous nature of the schedule which the Government proposed to thrust on us for another three years. He (Mr. Purkiss) gloried in in the amendment, and was more than satisfied that the Government and their dumb, driven followers were utterly unable to distinguish right from wrong.

[3:55 o'clock, a.m.]

[The Sergeant-at-Arms at this stage entered the *Hansard* gallery and directed the reporters to retire.

*Hansard* reporters retired, as ordered, but remained in attendance within the precincts until 5:25 a.m., when the House adjourned.

*Extract from the Clerk's Minutes of Votes and Proceedings.*

Mr. Nanson moved, as an amendment to the description of the Beverley Electoral District, that all the words after "Hotham River" be struck out.

Debate ensued.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Beverley district agreed to.

Boulder, Brown Hill, Bunbury, Can-  
ning, Claremont, Collie, Coolgardie, Cue  
and Dundas Electoral Districts agreed  
to.

Mr. James moved that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

Question put and passed.

Mr. Illingworth, as Deputy Speaker, resumed the Chair, and reported that the Committee had considered the Bill, made progress, and asked leave to sit again.

Ordered, that the Committee have leave to sit again at the next sitting of the House.

ADJOURNMENT.

MR. JAMES moved that the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

The House accordingly adjourned.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 29th September, 1903.

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THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, assenting to Supply Bill, £500,000.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by SIR E. H. WITTENOOM, leave of absence for two months granted to the Hon. J. E. Richardson, on the ground of urgent private business.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT  
BILL.

SECOND READING (MOVED).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill), in moving the second reading, said: In introducing this Bill, I would first like to remark that the contention which has been raised in this House as to the time and opportunity for introducing this measure seems to me to be somewhat inapplicable. It has been said that the last session of a Parliament is not the right time to introduce a Bill which makes changes in the Constitution of a State. I beg to join issue on that statement. In the first place, perhaps I may not object to the statement so much as regards this Chamber, which is supposed to possess as one of its attributes a certain amount of continuity, but as regards another place no more fitting time than just prior to a dissolution of the Lower House could be seized for the introduction of such a measure. It saves the expense and trouble and disruption of a general election, and indeed renders it possible to conduct the affairs of the State with one dissolution of Parliament instead of two. With regard to the Bill now before the Chamber, I would point